







**MODERN EDUCATION  
AND HUMAN VALUES**

**A series of six lectures  
under the auspices of  
the School of Education  
of the University of Pittsburgh  
delivered during the school year, 1946-47  
four in the Stephen Collins Foster Memorial  
and two in the Carnegie Music Hall**

# MODERN EDUCATION AND HUMAN VALUES

*PITCAIRN-CRABBE FOUNDATION  
LECTURE SERIES*

VOLUME I

BOYD H. BODE

DOUGLAS SOUTHALL FREEMAN

ARTHUR H. COMPTON

HENRY P. VAN DUSEN

ROBERT M. HUTCHINS

ORDWAY TEAD

1947

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH PRESS

**COPYRIGHT, 1947**

**UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH PRESS**

**PRINTED IN U.S.A. BY DAVIS & WARDE, INC., PITTSBURGH, PA.**

## PREFACE

**T**HE six lectures printed in this book were delivered during the school year, 1946-47, under the auspices of the School of Education of the University of Pittsburgh. They were made possible by a grant from the Pitcairn-Crabbe Foundation. And they are printed in the order of their delivery.

Early in the year 1946, Dr. Hugh Thomson Kerr, secretary of the Pitcairn-Crabbe Foundation, and the directors of the Foundation expressed an interest in bringing to the University and to Pittsburgh leaders who could discuss the major social and moral issues which confront education today. They asked the University to choose the speakers and a subject for the lecture series. The committee and the Foundation agreed on the general subject, "Modern Education and Human Values." They invited speakers of differing educational experience and of varying points of view.

The lectures were attended by representatives of education in western Pennsylvania. Many letters of appreciation have come from them into the University and the Foundation.



The University of Pittsburgh is grateful to the Pitcairn-Crabbe Foundation for these lectures and to all who helped make them a success.

A second series of lectures will be delivered by other speakers during the school year, 1947-48, and will be printed as Volume II.

SAMUEL P. FRANKLIN, *Dean*

School of Education

June, 1947

## FOREWORD

**T**HE conflict in which the world is now engaged in understanding itself and in discovering the way to enduring peace presents a challenge to our democratic institutions, especially those devoted to education. Everywhere is mistrust and suspicion, insomuch that even while we celebrate peace, we continue the war—not with bombs and guns but with confusion of words and ideas. As part of the confusion the question thrusts itself upon us: What is education? when we should be asking the more personal question, What is man—whom we are seeking to educate?

The problems we face in our world may involve economics. They may involve a clash of interests between capitalism and communism. They may be a conflict between an encroaching socialism and a philosophy of free enterprise; but fundamentally they are problems of ideology and morals or, to put it in other language, they are the problems of education and human relations. It is heartening to know that our best educators are seeking to understand and correctly appraise the conflict.

This conflict is more quickly discerned by comparing or rather contrasting the two cultures which find it difficult at present to understand each other.

The difficulty in reaching a basis of good will is not in the realm of atomic energy or military strategy but in the way these two cultures think and the answer they give to the age-old question, What is man? In general the civilization that looks back to Karl Marx answers that man is a machine. It holds that "all the labor of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system." Man is a machine, they say, to be used for some ulterior end, and when worn out, to be cast on the scrap heap of the world and forgotten. This philosophy leads inevitably to the slave state, in which man becomes not an end in himself but an instrument in the hands of an overlord.

On the other hand, the civilization that looks back to its Hebraic-Christian inheritance answers the question, What is man? by asserting that man is a person—a person who is self-conscious, made in the image of God, who will endure the shock of death and transcend the limitations of space and time. The final answer when we ask the real question will determine whether men shall be free citizens or chattels of a slave state. The question which education must answer before it builds its curriculum, then, is: What are we educating?

It would be a mistake, however, to accept any appraisal in terms of geographical areas as the area in which this issue is to be resolved. In a true sense, no ideological iron curtain can exist between nations, for the tides of truth and error wash the shores of every land. It is openly acknowledged that the conflict between secularism and a spiritual interpretation of the universe is everywhere present and has become acute

in Western culture, and at the same time we have reason to believe that the light of truth has not been entirely extinguished even in lands where the teaching of materialistic determinism prevails. The conflict is not local then, but world wide. And the question is one education should consider.

The Pitcairn-Crabbe Foundation in making possible the course of lectures given under the auspices of the University of Pittsburgh is conscious of this conflict and seeks to clarify the issue and to find for America and for the world a satisfying answer to the question Chancellor Robert Hutchins asks in his speech, "Is American Education Obsolete?"

It should be stated that the selection of the lecturers was left entirely with the School of Education of the University of Pittsburgh.

HUGH THOMSON KERR  
*Executive Secretary*  
Pitcairn-Crabbe Foundation



# MODERN EDUCATION AND HUMAN VALUES

REORIENTATION IN EDUCATION	1
<i>June 21, 1946</i>	
BOYD H. BODE, professor emeritus, Ohio State University	
HUMAN VALUES IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES	28
<i>October 11, 1946</i>	
DOUGLAS SOUTHALL FREEMAN, editor <i>The Richmond News Leader</i>	
THE WORLD EDUCATES FOR PEACE	48
<i>January 16, 1947</i>	
ARTHUR H. COMPTON, chancellor, Washington University	
RELIGION AND EDUCATION	69
<i>March 6, 1947</i>	
HENRY P. VAN DUSEN, president Union Theological Seminary	
IS THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OBSOLETE?	97
<i>March 28, 1947</i>	
ROBERT M. HUTCHINS, chancellor, University of Chicago	
EDUCATION FOR SELF AND SOCIETY	120
<i>June 27, 1947</i>	
ORDWAY TEAD, chairman of Board of Higher Education, New York City	



**MODERN EDUCATION  
AND HUMAN VALUES**





# REORIENTATION IN EDUCATION

BOYD H. BODE

**F**OR the average American a major faith has long been his faith in education. This faith, however, has usually been more robust than critical. One might almost say that it has been akin to faith in magic. The process by which education makes bigger and better citizens has been left obscure; but the power of education has not been questioned, provided only there was enough education. To make sure there would be enough, the American people, in the course of time, created a system of public education which, in scope, is the greatest the world has ever seen.

At the present time the American faith in education, while not less strong, is becoming more discriminating. The great war which has so recently come to a close has brought home to us that the world cannot be saved by merely increasing the amount or scope of education. There is bad education as well as good education. Education, in the hands of the Nazis and the Japanese, became a menace to all the values of civilization which we prize most highly, and it bred a loyalty and devotion—or, if you prefer, a fanaticism—which we felt scarcely able to match. The object lesson which was thus provided for us did more than emphasize the difference between good and bad educa-

## MODERN EDUCATION

tion; it invited serious reflection on the nature of the difference.

As our point of departure we may take the proposition that education in the abstract is neither good nor bad. What makes it good or bad is the fundamental philosophy, the system of values, the way of life embodied in it. Furthermore, our late enemies gave an impressive demonstration that the effectiveness of education is tremendously enhanced if the connection between the underlying philosophy and the educative processes is simple and direct. They had an undeniable advantage because their philosophy was easily taught and easily understood. The doctrine that a particular race and culture are superior to all others and that any doubt of this is a form of blasphemy is so simple even morons and halfwits can grasp it. The emotional attitudes required by this type of doctrine are equally simple. Contempt for other races, unquestioning obedience to an emperor or fuehrer, glorification of the military virtues, callousness to the interests or the sufferings of those outside the pale—these and like traits could be inculcated upon the minds of youth without heavy demands on teaching techniques.

If we turn now to our own system of public education, we seem to be confronted with a paradox. We are all agreed on education for democracy but no one seems to know what is meant by democracy. In view of this paradox, our faith in education still retains a disagreeable resemblance to faith in magic. A reorientation in education, then, is becoming imperative. A policy of drift is bound to prove too wasteful and

## AND HUMAN VALUES

too dangerous. The problem to be faced is why we have been less successful in making our great American tradition of democracy a gospel to live by than our recent enemies were in making their philosophy a reality. We all give lip service to democracy, but this superficial agreement covers a disturbing amount of disagreement and uncertainty and confusion. The expression "our American way of life" has become common, but we are not even sure whether democracy is a way of life or just a name for a certain form of political machinery.

### II

To understand this situation we need to take a glance at our national history. In Lincoln's phraseology, this nation was "conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." In this simple sentence we have at least the makings for a national faith and a national way of life. The suggestion lies at hand that we have become confused and uncertain because we have not succeeded in providing a definite meaning for the concepts, liberty and equality, so as to make them serviceable for the guidance of belief and conduct.

This the record bears out. The Founding Fathers were not primarily philosophers or theologians, and so they did not undertake to elaborate the meaning of liberty and equality very far beyond the needs of their more immediate situation. As practical men they were deeply concerned to remove certain obstacles to liberty

## MODERN EDUCATION

and equality which were all too evident in their time. What they saw and felt and remembered most vividly was the abuse of governmental power in the interests of political and economic and religious privilege, the remedy for which was largely a matter of placing restrictions on the functions of government—and particularly of centralized as contrasted with localized government. This emphasis on restriction is reflected in the Bill of Rights, in the Constitutional provisions that Congress shall establish no religion and issue no patents of nobility, and in the system of checks and balances as a protection against mob rule. The dominant idea in all their thinking about democracy was distrust of government, a distrust which has persisted down to the present day and which often tends to assume that the chief guarantee of liberty and equality lies in the protection of the individual against governmental interference. In Jefferson's familiar phraseology "that government is best which governs least."

To what extent the Founding Fathers regarded restriction of government as the essential feature of what we now call democracy is a question which we can leave to the historians. It seems clear, however, that their thinking was by no means confined to this level. The new government which they brought into being was invested with important positive functions. In the language of the Preamble, its purpose was "to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity"—which was clearly stak-

## AND HUMAN VALUES

ing out considerable new ground and not just paring down the operations of government.

What the Founding Fathers obviously sought was a government with a new purpose. The nature of this purpose, however, they did not make entirely clear, for the reason that it was doubtless not too clear to the Founding Fathers themselves. According to the Declaration of Independence the new government was to be founded on the *self-evident truths* that all men are created equal and that they are endowed by the Creator with certain inalienable rights, such as the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. In other words, the purpose of government was to seek conformity to the will of God. The Declaration also states, however, that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed, which seems to say that government is only an instrumentality for securing what the people want, and that the test of its worth is conformity to the will of the people.

These two tests of the instrument are different and the methods of applying them are different. In his correspondence Jefferson emphasizes utility or "happiness," which is an empirical test depending on conditions and circumstances and not on any theory of divine creation. Different circumstances, he remarks, "may have different utilities," and so it should not be considered strange that moral standards vary with differences in circumstances. "Nature has constituted *utility* to man the standard and best of virtue," and so it is a mistake to "look at Constitutions with sanctimonious reverence and deem them like the ark of the

## MODERN EDUCATION

covenant too sacred to be touched." On the contrary, "each generation . . . has a right to choose for itself the form of government it believes most promotive of its own happiness."<sup>1</sup> And in similar vein Lincoln stated in his first inaugural address: "This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they should weary of the existing government they can exercise their *constitutional* right of amending it or their *revolutionary* right to dismember or overthrow it."

### III

This ambiguity in the conception of purpose was perhaps not wholly unfortunate. It kept the American Revolution in line with the prevailing view that government must be based on the inherent and unalterable structure of the universe, and thus made it possible for the great mass of the American people to harmonize their loyalty to the new government with their religious beliefs. That is, the appeal to self-evident truths and the will of the Creator made the Revolution seem to them less radical by far in its moral implications than it really was. In form the Founding Fathers held to the idea that morality must be based on the will of God, and that the principle of separation between church and state was sound because the Creator intended men to be free and equal in religious as in other matters. In reality, this principle had

<sup>1</sup> *Thomas Jefferson on Democracy*, edited by S. K. Padover. Penguin Books, pp. 17, 67.

## AND HUMAN VALUES

validity because theological considerations were irrelevant to the social ideal which they desired to achieve, and, in fact, incompatible with it. But a morality detached from theological foundations would have been too disturbing for acceptance in those times, if its nature had been fully understood.

What the Founding Fathers had in mind was the kind of government typified by the New England town meeting. In idealized form such government is genuinely democratic because it affords opportunity for all interests concerned to make themselves heard and, furthermore, because it aims to devise a plan or program of action which will be acceptable all around and thus truly represent "the consent of the governed." What is needed to make such a government work is not agreement on the eternal structure of the universe, but a spirit of co-operation and good will, and so, in such government, atheists and skeptics can participate as wholeheartedly and effectively as anyone else. The only antecedent commitment involved is to the ideal or purpose of promoting a common life which will provide maximum opportunity for all its members. By this test and no other, standards of right and wrong are determined; which is to say that in a democratic society morality is shifted from the level of theological doctrine to the level of social relationships.

Since men have to live together, there are always common affairs which can and must be handled co-operatively for the benefit or "happiness" of the whole group. Democracy universalizes this principle. It holds that as men of good will, despite their differences, con-



## MODERN EDUCATION

tinuously widen the area of common interests, they are on the road towards building themselves a kingdom of heaven on earth. Morality has its roots in loyalty to this common life; and democracy instead of being merely a political arrangement becomes a principle of living which applies to all phases of human activity. In academic language, democracy means that the continuous extension of common interests and purposes among men is the road to the good life.

In brief, our historic democracy carried with it from the start a conflict of moral ideals. One of these ideals holds that morality is supernatural in its basis and sanctions; the other ideal is based on the proposition that morality grows out of social relationships and is as empirical in its procedures as regulations for the control of traffic or the safeguarding of health. The Founding Fathers did much to give impetus to this latter ideal, but they did not bring the conflict between the two ideals out into the open. In colloquial phrase, "they worked both sides of the street." The reason doubtless was that they did not realize clearly the meaning of what they were doing. Nevertheless, because they opened up a new road to liberty and equality they established an enduring claim to enlightened statesmanship. They builded better than they knew.

There is general agreement that democracy requires the separation of church and state. This separation, however, turns out to be meaningless unless the concept of "free and equal" is kept free from theological interpretation. What is not so generally understood is that this separation calls for a different basis for

## AND HUMAN VALUES

morality; which means that democracy has its own distinctive morality. This in turn carries the further meaning that the real issue is not "separation" but "supremacy." In all cases of conflict the democratic standard has the right of way. Democracy can travel no other road. It requires us to reject absolutes in morality as we reject absolutes in science. The only thing that counts is the foreseeable consequences of a proposed line of conduct, in terms of their bearing on human relations. "By their fruits shall ye know them." This is sometimes called humanism or naturalism, because it by-passes all theological and metaphysical questions, such as the existence of God or a life after death.

### IV

When we turn to social relationships for our interpretation of a moral life it soon appears that no inclusive pattern for moral conduct can be fixed in advance. Both external circumstances and individual endowments vary without limit, and life fulfills itself in many ways. The characteristic trait of democracy is its concern to protect the principle of "free association" in order to provide maximum opportunity for fulfillment. It is no accident that under our democratic institutions we have become, almost notoriously, a nation of "joiners." We have all kinds of religious denominations and sects; we have a multitude of labor unions; we have a vast array of industrial and commercial organizations. If we add to all these our civic

## MODERN EDUCATION

improvement societies, our country clubs, our sewing circles, our parent-teacher associations, our movements for women's rights, for better movies, for planned parenthood, and what not, we presently get a realizing sense that man liveth not to himself alone and that the number and variety of ways for releasing native capacity and seeking enrichment of life through formal or informal associations are literally infinite. For example, it was reported in the newspapers a few years ago that an association had been formed "For the Discouraging of Derogatory Remarks about Brooklyn." A democracy, as a cynic once said, guarantees to every man the right to make a fool of himself. Stated more sympathetically, a democracy is concerned to protect the right of every man to experiment with the possibilities of achieving values, of enriching life and developing capacity, by forming associations of his own choosing. Something like this is the emerging meaning of liberty and equality.

It goes without saying that this endless diversity of associations on the basis of common interests requires governmental regulation. In a democracy, however, the government is not entitled to prescribe the forms or patterns for this urge to achieve values or enrichment of life through association. Nor is it authorized to sit in judgment on the relative merits of these efforts, as long as they can be harmonized or adjusted within the larger framework. Regulation is necessary to keep open the door of opportunity for all, to keep vested interests and pressure groups from trampling on people who get in their way, and to foster the spirit of wider

## AND HUMAN VALUES

understandings and wider co-operation on the basis of wider common purposes. Such regulation is indispensable, and it is of a distinctive kind. The state is indeed supreme, but as John Dewey, our great philosopher of democracy and education, puts it: "Its 'supremacy' approximates that of the conductor of an orchestra, who makes no music himself but who harmonizes the activities of those who in producing it are doing the thing intrinsically worth while. The state remains important—but its importance consists more and more in its power to foster and co-ordinate the activities of voluntary groupings."<sup>1</sup>

The concept of democracy has become an urgent problem for us because conditions have changed. The simplicity which characterized American life in an earlier day has passed away. We have become industrialized and urbanized and interdependent: we have developed a mass of divergent and conflicting interests which would inevitably lead to anarchy and jungle warfare if the government did not intervene with positive and extensive regulation. The surest road to the loss of liberty and equality would be to withhold such regulation. No one wants to be let alone these days. Whether we like it or not, the functions of government continue to increase in number and importance, and there is nothing we can do about it. Custom and tradition, however, are becoming increasingly inadequate as guides to readjustment. What then is the meaning of democracy? If *amount* of regulation is taken as the test, then the pessimists are right when they warn us

<sup>1</sup>*Reconstruction of Philosophy*, pp. 203, 204.

## MODERN EDUCATION

that we are on the road to totalitarianism. Not so, however, if the regulation has a democratic purpose or quality. If the nature of this purpose can be made clear, we will find ourselves on the road towards a common faith or destiny, towards a distinctive way of life which we can embody and bring to consciousness in our system of public education.

### V

The need for reorientation in education is naturally linked up with social changes. The little red school-house of historic fame was quite unaware of any problem of reorientation. This was, in part, because its program was confined so largely to the three R's. Even as late as the 1880's, so the experts tell us, the *per capita* education in this country was equivalent to the work done in the first three grades. We were a nation of third graders. It was hardly to be expected, therefore, that the public schools should lead the way in developing a social sensitiveness to the need of clarifying the concept of democracy. Their great achievement lay, not in clarifying, but in popularizing the idea of democracy and making it a symbol of Americanism. By common consent our public schools played a large part in transforming our heterogeneous population into Americans, with a common ideal and a common aspiration. In some way or other they managed to do this and thus to justify our national faith in education. But it was done without any significant departure from traditional subject matter and method. As with the

## AND HUMAN VALUES

Founding Fathers, there was little awareness of any conflict between the old and the new. In the language of the poet, "God moves in mysterious ways His wonders to perform."

It is different now. Our *per capita* education has more than doubled; all kinds of new subjects have worked their way into the curriculum; the scientific attitude of mind is changing our national psychology; and the complexities of modern life are making unprecedented demands for vocational education. As a consequence, we are beset with cleavages and conflicts which cannot be remedied by anything short of a basic reorientation. Our tradition of official neutrality with respect to theological doctrines, for example, can hardly be maintained in the teaching of such topics as evolution and the history of the Reformation, or the nature of mind and the significance of modern science and the scientific method. The familiar distinction between culture and vocation is fighting a losing battle against the claim of the natural sciences and the vocational subjects that they provide "gateways to culture" which are at least the equal—and perhaps the superior—of those in the past. And in the social sciences the issue of supremacy, as between church and state, comes close to the surface in such matters as polygamy, flag saluting, compulsory education, the conscientious objector, academic freedom, censorship of movies and the mails, and the like. We have become confused and bewildered because the underlying issue as to the nature and origin of moral standards is kept out of sight. One result of all this is that the expansion of education is accom-

## MODERN EDUCATION

panied by the feeling that we are somehow missing the boat. Despite improvement in methods, a large part of our educational program remains "academic" in quality, in the sense that it has no significant bearing on life outside the school. On the other hand, the "practical" subjects are so circumscribed by emphasis on information and skills as to constitute preparation not for life but for a groove or a rut. Under present circumstances we can scarcely hope to educate effectively for a "common life" unless we come to grips with the question as to the nature and basis of the common life to which we profess to give our allegiance.

The ominous feature of the present situation is that the concept of democracy is in process of losing its significance as a dynamic and guiding principle in American life. Among the sophisticated the term democracy is beginning to be greeted with a lifting of eyebrows and perhaps a deprecatory smile. Democracy has come to mean all things to all men, or different things to the same man under different circumstances. It can be taken to mean restriction on government, or majority rule, or inalienable rights, or a vague notion of devotion to "progress" or the "common good," according to our preferences or our casual mood. The fact is that we are losing track of what we mean by democracy, though we still insist on believing in it—which suggests that we have begun to live on the momentum of the past. Our average American citizen has become a house divided against itself. On the one hand, he has retained the disposition or habit of viewing governmental regulation with distrust or suspicion,

## AND HUMAN VALUES

as a danger to liberty and equality, and particularly a danger if it proposes to interfere with any of his special interests. But on the other hand, he is all for governmental regulation, even in trivial matters, if he happens to consider regulation desirable. He wants less government and he wants a great deal more—and he wants both in the name of liberty and equality. Education may give him a wider horizon, but as a rule widening the horizon merely gives him more territory in which to get lost. The most serious indictment that can be brought against our present-day system of public education is that it leaves our young people without a definite sense of direction.

### VI

We are approaching the parting of the ways. We must either go forward to an interpretation of democracy as embodying a distinctive form of morality or we must turn backwards for a guiding principle. If the two great wars of the recent past have any meaning, they are a warning that the world outgrows patterns of living as children outgrow their clothes. The present uncertainty and confusion cannot continue indefinitely without becoming a threat to our future as a people. We have learned, or we should have learned, that liberty and equality cannot be promoted by the simple expedient of making government as inconspicuous and inconsequential as possible. Neither can we safely rely on the practice of dealing with each social problem by itself and without reference to wider moral implications. We must have an over-all principle for collective



## MODERN EDUCATION

action, if we are to deal intelligently with social problems as they occur. Otherwise democracy becomes confused with tradition, with custom, with prejudice, or with the demands of institutions or of vested interests or of pressure groups which are primarily interested in maintaining and extending their own power.

It is not surprising, therefore, that American education should be greatly concerned at present with the question of underlying principles. Nor is it surprising—human nature being what it is—that strong efforts should be made to return to the patterns of the past, usually on the ground that the return is necessary in order that democracy may be preserved. One form of such efforts is the attempt to secure public support, either directly or indirectly, for what is called the teaching of religion. The issue involved here is frequently obscured by irresponsible charges that our public schools are irreligious, materialistic, devoted to sordid ideals of selfish advancement, and the like. Such charges derive whatever plausibility they may possess from the assumption that it is impossible to have moral ideals unless they are provided with a supernatural basis and supernatural sanctions. This assumption begs the whole question, because the issue is not whether moral ideals should form an integral part of education, but only how these ideals are to be interpreted and applied.

No honest person would deny that historic Christianity, through its doctrine of the brotherhood of man, has made invaluable contributions to the spirit of democracy. The practical question, however, for our own day and age is whether the ideal of brotherhood

## AND HUMAN VALUES

is best served by tying it up with theological doctrine or by letting it operate on its own. That is to say, the question is whether the test of brotherhood lies in how we live together or whether the test lies elsewhere. It is easy to understand why traditional theology has prejudged this question in the past, but it is not so easy to justify this attitude at the present time, when we have the material and intellectual resources for making the notion of a kingdom of heaven on earth more than an empty dream. Traditional doctrine in its more extreme forms has deliberately turned men's minds away from the building of a better world by admonishing them that the evils of life are to be endured with patience and submission, because our real rewards are to be sought elsewhere. Where it has shown effective concern for reform, traditional doctrine has tended to emphasize the idea that the spirit of brotherhood is a by-product or derivative of something else. That is, it has substituted other rewards for the reward which comes from the widening of shared experiences and the sense that our daily activities are of significance to others as well as to ourselves—a sense which can put a halo on the humblest and most irksome tasks and make life its own excuse for being. To make reward dependent on supernatural sanctions is to deny that apart from such sanction life can be made a thing of beauty and of worth. Such emphasis deflects attention from the central problem and the central task. "Sentimentally it may seem harsh to say that the greatest evil of the present regime is not found in poverty and the suffering it entails, but in the fact

## MODERN EDUCATION

that so many persons have callings which make no appeal to them, which are pursued simply for the monetary reward that accrues. For such callings constantly provoke one to aversion, ill will, and a desire to slight and evade. Neither men's hearts nor their minds are in their work."<sup>1</sup>

The logic of the position goes still further. If religion in its traditional meaning is necessary for morality, it becomes a matter of plain common sense to make the teaching of religion a required subject, to apply a religious test to our teachers, and to keep a watchful eye on the schools so as to protect the purity of the faith. Since morality is essential, the beliefs and attitudes required for morality are likewise essential. This would be logical, but it would not be democracy. It would start us back on the road towards an evil past. The pressure to put "religion" into the schools has indeed the advantage that it proposes to supply the schools with a fundamental philosophy or way of life. But it represents a proposal to use the public schools for the purpose of promoting a way of life which competes with democracy. In effect it is an invitation to democracy to commit suicide.

## VII

Another form of the attempt to derive our standards from the past is the current revival of "classicism" or the gospel of "the hundred best books." To the casual eye the approach in this plan is very different. There appears to be no indication of any intention to offer a

<sup>1</sup>J. Dewey, *Democracy and Education*, p. 370.

## AND HUMAN VALUES

framework for belief and conduct, such as lies behind the demand for the teaching of religion. The classics offer no unified and consistent philosophy of life. What is claimed for them is that they present a "vision of greatness" in a variety of fields through which the student may be enabled to raise his beliefs and standards to a higher level by his own independent effort. The appeal is not to authority but to reason or intelligence. The plan thus gives full recognition to the democratic demand of respect for personality, and at the same time, provides for the continuity of our culture through the assimilation of the finest achievements of culture as embodied in great books. Moreover, the interests of democracy are to be further served by extending this type of education not merely to the privileged few, but to all persons, without discrimination, if they give evidence of being able to profit by it.

Unfortunately it is necessary to warn against these modern Greeks, even when they come bearing gifts. It pays to bear in mind that the educational point of view which they represent had its origin in a social order which was frankly and avowedly aristocratic. The idea that vocations or practical affairs could be made a gateway for intellectual, moral, and esthetic development would have been scorned as preposterous in those days of long ago. In extenuation of this attitude it may be conceded that there was much in the circumstances of the times to justify it. Lacking the transforming touch of modern science and technology, and lacking the sense of meaningfulness which is fostered by our present-day relations of interdependence, the jobs in

## MODERN EDUCATION

which common men were engaged were all too often of the kind portrayed by the painting and the poem entitled "The Man with the Hoe." Educationally and socially vocations were beyond the pale. Standards of belief and conduct, and more specifically moral standards, must be derived from a different source. The uncompromising opposition between vocation and culture which has persisted throughout the centuries is now being pressed upon our attention, not as a return to aristocracy but as exactly the remedy that is needed to bring the hopes and aspirations of our democracy to full fruition. Can it be that the leopard has really changed his spots?

The purpose of this query is not in the least to insinuate that our modern "classicists" are insincere in their devotion to democratic sentiments and ideals. The fact, however, that the program which they offer undertakes from the outset to predetermine the form which "the pursuit of happiness" is to take is an indication that once again the question at issue is going to be begged from the start. Whether they ever know it or not, the happiness of men, so we are told, lies in "the cultivation of the mind"; which is to say that vocations are ruled out in advance, since it is taken for granted that the social context in which vocations operate cannot generate moral insight. Vocational education, therefore, automatically limits the student to the acquisition of relevant subject matter plus the cultivation of habits and skills, and his intelligence or mind is limited at best to considerations of narrow utility; that is, to what has been described as a low order of cun-

## AND HUMAN VALUES

ning. If we grant, for the sake of the argument, that the study of the classics provides a corrective for this limitation, we soon discover that the ability to carry on study of the classics and to bring back from it the insights or the "principles" which are needed for progress in the domain of the vocations is limited to those individuals who have the right I.Q. and the right intellectual tastes. All others—and they constitute a sizable majority—must be content to live out their lives as hewers of wood and drawers of water under the direction of their betters. This is the old aristocracy dressed in modern clothes.

It is worth while to note that the difference between this position and the position of those who urge the teaching of religion in the schools is not as great as might appear on the surface. Both agree that our standards for belief and conduct must come from an eternal (and literally *super-natural*) realm if we are to have any standards other than a crass determination to get while the getting is good. In both positions this initial assumption is made without serious examination; the possibility of deriving standards from social relationships is quietly ignored. The two positions, therefore, have a broad common base; and the traditional ideal of the "Christian gentleman," as long cultivated in our colleges, is evidence that they can manage to get along together pretty well. They are far less concerned to wage war on each other than to join forces in fighting the spirit of science and "practicality," which is a challenge to the basic assumption that they hold in common. It is too late in the day, of course, to attack

## MODERN EDUCATION

science openly or even to ignore it. The joint task of those who hold either position is to keep science and its applications in their proper place, which means that neither must be permitted to invade the domain of morality and religion.<sup>1</sup> This domain is to be held in fee simple by metaphysics and theology.

The stakes are large. It is becoming increasingly difficult to harmonize the ideal of democracy with the presuppositions or assumptions which we have inherited from the past. There is mounting pressure from the direction of modern scholarship to re-examine and reinterpret such concepts as mind (or intelligence) and truth and scientific method and the relation of the "individual" to "society" and the nature of individual differences. There is likewise mounting pressure—as is shown dramatically in the councils of the United Nations—to explore how the areas of co-operation among men may be widened in a modern world. The refusal to consider how far we can go in sole reliance on scientific knowledge and scientific method is an invitation to disaster. Despite its emphasis on "reason," the attitude of classicism towards science and scientific method is as dogmatic as anything that ever came out of the Vatican.

### VIII

It has become a platitude to say that we are living in an age of revolution. The old patterns of living are

<sup>1</sup>This is also the central concern of the recent Harvard report on "General Education in a Free Society."

## AND HUMAN VALUES

collapsing under the strain of new conditions; the new wine is ruining the old bottles. We are gradually discovering that democracy will not fit into the old frame of reference or the old way of life. We must reconstruct our way of life in terms of a different moral outlook or else we must conclude that democracy does not fit modern conditions. Democracy is on trial because it is coming into open conflict with tradition. The issue can be stated in various ways: We must make up our minds about the reinterpretation of morality, and of spiritual values generally. We must face the problem of two-worldism. We must decide whether free inquiry after the pattern of scientific method is the only road to truth. These are merely different ways of saying the same thing.

In looking back over our history as a nation, we can now see that the forces in our national life which were making for a changing conception of democracy have been in operation for a long time. The changes that gradually occurred in American education have frequently taken the form of more or less grudging concessions to the spirit of "practicality" which was always in the background and which was often criticized because it was supposed to make our national character less spiritual and idealistic than it should be. All kinds of subject matter managed to crowd their way into the curriculum, despite the efforts of the high priests of culture to keep them out. In retrospect this development takes on a different meaning. After full allowance has been made for the desire to increase earning power, we still have left a residuum of idealism which



## MODERN EDUCATION

provided motivation for the changes that had taken place, and which is still as strong as it ever was. It was an idealism, however, which sought fulfillment in a different way; it was an aspiration which walked by faith and not by sight. The inarticulate demand was for a type of education that was more closely related to "life." Our present task is to make clear that the real issue is not culture versus vocation, but culture which is achieved by making vocation an embodiment of spiritual values through constantly widening participation in common interests and purposes, as over against a culture which originated in disdain for vocation and which held itself aloof from the concerns of a struggling, sweating humanity.

The reorientation in education which is required if we are to remain loyal to our tradition of democracy is still in large part a task for the future. In education at least there is still a frontier. The general mode of approach to be made, however, has already become apparent. The social interpretation of democracy as applied to education makes the school, first of all, an extension of the community. The school is itself a community, but a community oriented specifically with reference to the life outside of the school. That is to say, it is a community which provides more favorable conditions for participation in the wider life of the community than are possible outside. Its task, therefore, is to simplify as needed the conditions of communication and co-operation, to cultivate the attitudes and habits required for democratic living, and to assume a special responsibility for the dis-

## AND HUMAN VALUES

covery and cultivation of the aptitudes and capacities of individual pupils, so as to ensure more satisfying and more effective participation in a common life. With reference to these purposes the school becomes a model community, the character and activities of which naturally vary with differences in communities. In Dewey's phrase, education is not preparation for future living but a form of present living; the school is a place where pupils go, not to accumulate detached information and skills, but to carry on a way of life.

It must be admitted that the confusion in the concept of democracy has sometimes led to misdirected effort, by the schools which were undertaking to do pioneer work of this general nature. The concern for the pupil has in some schools resulted in making the school an escape from the harsh realities of life. The school then becomes a place where the pupil finds himself the object of gratifying but unwholesome attention, where his passing whims receive a consideration which they do not deserve, where unwelcome tasks can be avoided; where, in short, a pleasant time is had by all—with the possible exception of the teacher. At any rate, the impression has been created that this is about what is meant by progressive education. Aberrations of this kind obviously cannot be used as legitimate arguments for keeping the schools to the traditional pattern.

A second major point in the reorientation of education must be mentioned, even though in hasty and scanty fashion. Education for membership in a democratic social order cannot be considered adequate

## MODERN EDUCATION

unless provision is made for an understanding of the cleavage or conflict in our cultural heritage between the old and the new, between the traditional outlook on life and the attitude or point of view which derives its impetus or momentum from modern science and technology. It is in this conflict that all our basic educational problems come to a focus. It is a conflict that meets us on all levels and in all areas of education. In the social sciences we encounter the problem of the nature of morality, of which our American history is but an illustration. In the natural sciences we come upon a background of struggle between scientific and prescientific modes of thinking, which has dogged the footsteps of science all the way and which must be taken into account if we are to understand what it is that science is doing to our modern civilization. In mathematics we come upon the question whether axioms embody absolute truth or are to be regarded as postulates which are creations of the human mind and which can claim only a limited validity. In the field of art and literature the issue takes the form of a conflict between the "classical" and the "pragmatic" interpretation of esthetic standards.

These are all aspects of the problem of the meaning of scientific method for the modern man. The revisions in the selection of subject matter and in teaching methods which are necessary to bring this problem out into the open are tasks which are, in large part, still ahead of us. These tasks must be undertaken if our students are to be put in a position where they can exercise their inalienable right of personal judgment with

## AND HUMAN VALUES

respect to the meaning and scope of scientific method and its significance for democracy. Whatever may have been a suitable form of liberal education in the past, the modern man needs to face the challenge that comes from science and scientific method if he is to find his way out of the present confusion and reinterpret his spiritual values in the light of his own knowledge and his own experience.

Never before has education had so great an importance and so large a task as at the present time. Never before has the teaching profession had so great an opportunity. It is an opportunity to provide ample justification for the faith of the American people in education and in their tradition of democracy and to make an indispensable contribution to the future of our country as a nation and to the future of civilization in the world.

# HUMAN VALUES IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

DOUGLAS SOUTHALL FREEMAN

**Y**OU should be forewarned I shall try to make my transitions this evening in such a manner that you will not brood over the minutes that may elapse between the time you are dosed with "first" and the moment at which you are released from medication with "sixth and finally"; but I think I ought to confess there are six points in the argument I am going to make. They might as well be gulped down now as left on the bedside table to be taken as the clock ticks. Introduction to the human values in the unified and inseparable social sciences is quite similar to that of the development of an individual's special interests. That is the beginning of the case. Second, the appreciation of those values depends largely upon the teacher. Extension of those values—the third point—is a matter of research. Next, the validity of the findings of research in the social sciences is in direct ratio to honest recognition of the strict limitations of applicability. Fifth, within these limits, experiential human values of one special type are more nearly constant and are more directly applicable than are most of the others. Finally, the most useful application of those human values is, as Sienkiewicz said of his novels on Polish history, "for the strengthening of souls."

## AND HUMAN VALUES

### I

Now, if you came here with any mild curiosity to ascertain how a stranger would go about the treatment of a subject with a somewhat forbidding title, your curiosity is satisfied. You consequently can quit or can go confidently to sleep; but if you are bold enough to go on, I should like to ask you a question: Those "special interests" of yours—where did you get them? Why, when one man goes to New York, will he run to Broadway and walk up and down it all day, while the man who traveled in the next berth to him on the Pullman car will chafe and refuse to look at anything until the Metropolitan Museum of Art opens at 10 o'clock? One Pittsburgher will devote his summer vacation to trout fishing; his neighbor will ask nothing better than to go to Philadelphia and spend his days in breathless excitement among the manuscripts of the Pennsylvania Historical Society. You doubtless know a man who counts the months until he can hope to attend the Bach festival at Bethlehem, and another who will write indignantly to the radio station that its Hill-Billy programs have been outrageously curtailed to give "some crazy guy" time to talk of atomic energy. What makes these men as they are? The same differences exist in young people. Take two boys of fourteen into a library tomorrow and tell them to examine and to read any books they will because they will have to spend the day there. Of course, one of the boys is apt to break out of the window and thumb a ride to Pitt bowl; but the other may wander around

## MODERN EDUCATION

until a classification label or a glance at a title stops him. He may stay there till evening without exploring the other stacks or even asking how many there are, or to what subject they relate? Why does he stop in Stack QL with Entomology, and not in E-195, with American Colonial history?

If, as the children say, "You give up," so do I. In fact, I have only an idea that where no profitable inheritance of a remunerative business or profession is involved, the explanations of our special interests are as varied as the individuals; and I suspect this is true alike of our vocations, if they interest us, and of our avocations. The closest approach we can make to a generalization would be approximately this: at any stage of life when we are emotionally or intellectually impressionable, we may have the chance good fortune to meet with a person or to have an experience that appeals to our imagination or answers a question we already have asked ourselves. We adventure a little in that field, we have some success in it by chance or otherwise—and we go on!

I hope I have not been "stringing" you with my quiz, rigging my definition to fit my application—a practice not unknown among historical writers—because what I have said about persons or occurrences that appeal to our imagination or answer our questions almost epitomizes what I regard as the most gratifying introduction to the human values in the social sciences. Please note that plural, and note also, if you will, that I am not going to distinguish among them. It is a poor science that seeks new frontiers of human knowledge

## AND HUMAN VALUES

and then sets up hostile boundaries. I maintain, with deference, that the social sciences include history, politics, economics, sociology, and education—and I know of no valid definition of any of them that does not include much of the neighboring domain of all the others. Specialization of interest within the social sciences is useful only as it prevents diffusion of effort. It is a reproach to religion that man ever hates his neighbor for love of God; it is a stain on scholarship that even the most stubborn, myopic man execrates what he has not explored, or depreciates what he cannot even depict. When we close the windows to protect the secrets of our own interest, we shut out more light than ever we kindle. The jealousy of the prophet is the confession of his own lack of faith in his tribal deity. In his *De Interpretatione Naturae Proeamium*, Sir Francis Bacon professed what scholars of humbler mind should set as the ideal of their study of the social sciences: "I found that I was fitted for nothing so well as for the study of truth; as having a mind nimble and versatile enough to catch the resemblances of things (which is the chief point) and at the same time steady enough to fix and distinguish their subtler differences. . . . " That, I admit, was a vainglorious statement for a man who apparently never read Vesalius or heeded Harvey; but Bacon certainly was correct in maintaining that "the chief point" is the "resemblances of things." I hold it to be more serviceable in the social sciences, to integrate than to differentiate. Had scholars of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century given economic history the attention



## MODERN EDUCATION

it deserves, would Karl Marx have captured the minds of so vast a company?

### II

This much asserted, and I hope, accepted, may we go back to our suggestion that the human values in the social sciences begin where those of our special interests do, when, at any impressionable stage of life, we have the good fortune to meet with a person or to have an experience that stirs our imagination or satisfies our curiosity? Usually, one's introduction to the human values begins with a human being, perhaps a parent, more often a teacher. You will remember that in his charming rectorial address at St. Andrews James M. Barrie said that the universities of Scotland were five, not four, that besides Aberdeen and Edinburgh and Glasgow and St. Andrews, there was the fireside where parents resolved that their sons should know. It still is from the parent, thank God, that many boys and girls get their first inspiration to explore those delightful realms that entrance us old wayfarers; but I think we have to make this reservation: it is not enough that the father should himself have a love of the social sciences—or, for that matter, of any other sciences or arts. He must know how to make them attractive and how to step along lightly when youths are indolent or timid, as he has in honesty to warn them *ars est longa*. No father is faithful to his trust if he does not make his son realize the necessity of work; but I take it that no father is wise who groans over the toil

## AND HUMAN VALUES

his profession involves or demonstrates by his own conversation that all work and no play makes John Sr. a dull "stuffed shirt." May not a father discourage one heart as surely as he may make another beat faster by describing how high the mountains of scholarship are, and how difficult to climb?

Frequently, as the father or mother of adolescents in puzzled words admits, a boy more readily heeds any other counsel than that of the parent who loves him best. It is this, as all of us know, that gives the teacher his maximum opportunity, and this that prompts one to say the human values in the social sciences best are disclosed by teachers of human mind.

We never will attract more students to the social sciences until we make the teaching of them more attractive. This all of us will assert confidently and some of us experientially in undying gratitude. You remember now with kindling eye that old teacher of history or of economics who came briskly into the classroom door as the bell rang. He looked as if he had that very moment ceased counseling the public man most conspicuous in the news that morning. Perhaps he began with some aspect of that news and, as you listened, he knitted it with stout words and sure skill to the fabric of the yesterdays you were surveying. If it was the German Reformation of which he spoke, you saw Brother Martin, red-faced but resolute, come out of the Bischofshof. Was the teacher describing Cromwell's controversy with the Church of Scotland? You could hear Old Nol's bones creak and his breath come fast as he sought to remind the delegates that, "by the

## MODERN EDUCATION

bowels of Christ," they might "be mistaken." You shared, did you, young Major Washington's visit to Shanopin's town and his conference with Half King at Logstown? The master so stirred your imagination that you ran ahead of him to Fort LeBoeuf, where Franklin, Pennsylvania, now stands, and you came back with George and with Christopher Gist to the banks of the Allegheny when the white sheet of winter, as young Washington wrote, spread "only about fifty yards from each shore: The ice, I suppose, had broken up above, for it was driving in vast quantities."

God bless the memory of the great teachers of your social sciences! Many of like spirit live now and have survived the ordeal of 1939-45, when eager students expected their teacher to know all the celebrities of the world, and the reason for Franklin Roosevelt's acts at Cairo, and precisely how far the Mena House Hotel was from Shephard's, and whether Mme. Chiang did the wise thing in interpreting for her husband. The appreciative student felt a bit of disappointment, perhaps, if the teacher had to admit that he never had visited Iwo Jima, on a professorial salary, but the interested boy was quite confident the professor's description of the island was accurate to the last contour of that dreadful beach where our marines landed. Yes, the human values of the social sciences are largely in the teaching; and in the teaching of men who believe in those sciences as men of old believed in religion.

Here, if my emotions do not master me, I have to profess the faith that is in me. I had the inestimable privilege when in college of following breathlessly a

## AND HUMAN VALUES

teacher of history who had all the zeal of an evangelist. He was one of the two persons responsible for the trend of my graduate study. Not all the dry lectures of a singularly bloodless succession of university savants quite destroyed the excitation he aroused in me. I then went into the full fury of that long journalistic war that began with the adoption of "schedule K" of the Payne-Aldrich Tariff of 1909 and continues to this day. Not until 1934 did I again have close touch with the "inside" of higher education. In that and the following years circumstance permitted me to examine certain institutions rather carefully and from different points of vantage. I still had, please understand, the conception of the teacher I had acquired under that blessed man who inspired me in college. It consequently was to me a shock past describing when I found cynicism, cold professionalism, and in a few instances, a positive dislike of students by some who taught, of all subjects, our sacred social sciences. The old spirit of evangelism was gone! To some men I met, the instruction of youth was not a life, but a way of making a living, not a religion but a denial of one. I know now that what I saw then was not typical, that I was unfortunate in encountering singularly discouraged groups of men; but I have thought many times, since that unhappy experience, of Cromwell's appeal, "Give me men who make some conscience of what they do"; and I say now, give us teachers in the social sciences who have faith in the human values of their subjects. The ideal of the teacher in our field, nay, in every field, was set forth long ago in a single sentence by that remarkable pio-

## MODERN EDUCATION

neer in the writing of biography, a young man named Mark. He described how "there came one running" to his own Teacher with a perplexing question, which he put with self-revealing candor. Mark laid out the first and the superlative requirement of the teacher when he wrote: "Then Jesus beholding him loved him."

Let us rest this part of our argument there; and if we have not said enough in praise of teaching, a man who has punished the public with numerous books and with little teaching would like with your indulgence to add one thing more: He had rather see this adoptive mother of his train one pre-eminent teacher of any social science than twenty men whose research would give us a paper of historical matches, the scratching of which would not light one yard of the road by which we have come, or of the way by which we must go.

### III

That is not said in disparagement of research. On the contrary, we started out by maintaining that in the social sciences as in the development of any special interest, one great boon of contact with an inspiring person or event was that it led us to adventure in that field. That, I take it, is a statement of the beginning of individual research. My criticism is in reality a plea that the very name social sciences compel research that stresses human values. May we not leave abstractions to our brethren of the exact sciences, for parts of which the laws have been found, while we confine our efforts to humankind among whom, we are admonished, every man is a law unto himself.

## AND HUMAN VALUES

How much more interesting research becomes in human terms! At the start, let us say, you undertake to find out something about a single individual. You may discover, to your amazement, that the greater the bulk of what has been written about him, the vaguer he appears. He may be like a picture recopied and re-photographed and retouched until all reality is gone. If you are lucky enough to escape this, you have at the beginning only the man's official papers and the references to him by his contemporaries. Then you find some of his letters and, after a time, you observe in what manner he acquitted himself in this emergency or that temptation. These are the first exciting laboratory tests, if you choose to call them that. In a year or so you begin to have some idea what the fellow will do in circumstances you see developing. Then, through the notes and documents you gradually see a personality, the outline of a figure. Finally, some day, he will crash through the sheet in front of you and, according to his nature, will bow silently and politely to you, or will smirk and inquire, "How do you like me?" or will scowl and roar, "What do you mean, you scoundrel, waking me up with your infernal rattling of that paper?"

Surely, for the student there is no greater fun in the world than that, unless it is to take your time and to do the same thing with a group of men, a larger though still an infinitesimal sector of society. Might I illustrate what I mean and at the same time instance the essential unity of the social sciences? All you who have worked in American history of the early con-

## MODERN EDUCATION

stitutional period are familiar with Max Farrand's *Records of the Federal Convention of 1787* in four volumes, and with Burnett's *Letters of Members of the Continental Congress*, eight volumes. This is rich material, by no means explored fully as yet. A company of historical workers at some university could take these and older collections of letters and documents and could approach the drafting of the Constitution by studying the economic experience, the reading, and the political careers of the individual delegates to the Philadelphia Convention. One risks little in predicting that this biographical approach would help to explain many twists of debate and not a few of the specific provisions of the nation's organic law. In numerous other large researches, though by no means in all those that invite inquiry, the lives of participants will be found to shape the events more than the events shape the careers of the public men. Is not this another way of saying that in the social sciences the human values are never to be ignored and sometimes are paramount? For that matter, the time may come when some philosopher of the social sciences will see the value of the biological approach.

### IV

Thus far, we have undertaken to draw the analogy between the adventurous aspect of social study and the development of a special interest. When we come to the part that social studies play in the answering of questions that often are the beginning of such a special

## AND HUMAN VALUES

interest, we emerge from the woods of controversy to the plain of accord.

All of us, I take it, subscribe heartily to the dictum of George Adam Smith that "history never repeats itself without interpreting itself." That is as true of economic and geographical history as of political. We may not always realize that the maxim is as applicable to the history of ignorance as to that of education. We newspaper editors are the most convinced subscribers to the exhortation of Lord Sherbrooke, "Educate your masters," because, over and over again we see mayors and governors and directing boards who hate to be coached in crossing the same hurdles that tripped their predecessors. Frequently it is conceit that deludes an executive into disregarding the experience of his own government even; more often, probably, public men fail to apply experience, gained at cost and pain, because they do not know where to look for it. In some cities and states, lack of higher education may be an asset in getting votes, but it is an unrecognized liability in getting information. You would be astounded if you were told how large a percentage of American office-holders of the lower brackets lack the familiarity with research methods that we assume to be a part of every educated man's equipment. Nor have these men in their regular administrative organization any agency or bureau that can ascertain which cities or states already have tried and have discarded, or have tested and applied what the new executive thinks is a "brand-new, swell idea." American taxpayers seldom realize how much of their money is wasted yearly because the



## MODERN EDUCATION

history of ignorance repeats itself and, in repeating, interprets or at least exposes itself. Cities that are too poor to provide research bureaus should employ some young college graduate to work in the municipal library and to answer the questions of lawmakers and executives who may be wise enough to think that others may have faced and answered those questions previously. In municipal administration, as at your Westinghouse plant or your steel works, the research dollar is the one that pays the largest dividends. If these observations do not seem to concern the human values in the social sciences, I beg you to remember those wise words of Henry Adams, "knowledge of human nature is the beginning and end of political education."

I take it that in the application of experience the variant is human nature. As Tennyson phrased the words, Ulysses was correct:

I am a part of all that I have met.  
Yet all experience is an arch wherethrough  
Gleams that untraveled world.

In the infinite diversity of its interpretation of historical or economic fact; in the extent to which "I" may change the value of "x"; in the naivete with which inherited prejudice is accepted as reasoned conviction—in man himself is the explanation of our inability to read aright the experience of man. Was not that what Shakespeare meant when he said that

All our yesterdays have lighted fools  
The way to dusty death.

## AND HUMAN VALUES

with all the emphasis on "fools"? Would it not be fair to maintain that all men's yesterdays will light the wise to richer life? The experience of man may be useless unless we know the men. We may deceive ourselves, also, by superficial resemblances that disregard the deeper consideration of human nature. Three years ago, for example, when Franklin Roosevelt was beginning to plan for the peace, he spoke of few things more frequently, I am told, than of avoiding the mistakes of Woodrow Wilson. He did avoid many of them, to his vast credit, but avoidance that overlooks suspicion and jealousy as factors in international relations can never achieve results.

To all these reservations others might be added, after the manner of Henry Cabot Lodge in 1919, till nothing be left. We shall do well, therefore, to say that the full experiential value of the social sciences in guiding us involves a complete knowledge of the past and an understanding of human nature that make a prudent man hesitate to say we ever can trust history as an adequate guide for tomorrow. We must try to strike the balance between relying too little on the past and trusting too much to it. The past and the present are the only fixed points for projecting the future; but of the details and motivation of many past events we know so little that we seldom can be sure that history offers a fixed point for projection. In other instances there are bench marks for our surveys. We know, for example, that the demagogue may seem to abuse free speech and in exercising it, to villify and deceive but that, in the end, freedom will destroy him. If honest public men

## MODERN EDUCATION

sometimes in America wince at hard words in the press, it is better to bear bruises than chains. Dictators know the power of the freedom we take for granted. Their first act, on the usurpation of authority, is to destroy the free press and free radio without which no man's words carry far.

As with this bench mark of experience, so it is with others. It might be interesting, had we time, to list those lessons of the past in economics, in political science, and in sociology that might be regarded as clear and established. Perhaps in economics we would have a somewhat different and a shorter list of verities than would have been maintained confidently at the hearings on the Federal Reserve bill of 1913. In social psychology the probability seems to be that we can draw no positive conclusions until the mind of Germany, which has been the laboratory, passes from its flux to some sort of stabilization. We shall not know what propaganda can do till we see what it has done at the end of one generation of *Nazi* agitation.

### V

In fields where change has been less rapid and less revolutionary the few established lessons of experience, the genuinely applicable human values, have one startling aspect. The way of progress has been the way of righteousness. Nearly all the established human values are moral values. This is true of public policy; it is true of public men. Had we been living in the American colonies in 1775, we might not have been able

## AND HUMAN VALUES

to predict that George Washington would emerge as the great figure of his age; but after he did emerge, we have no difficulty in seeing why. He had the judgment, the justice, and the energy, born of character and of self-discipline, that always have and always will triumph. As for public policy, nowhere more than in the social sciences, and to none more surely than to those who have walked the stony ways of the past, is it plain that "the things which are not seen are eternal." If any man were to ask me what truth of the social sciences may be regarded as established most firmly, what lesson of history most often repeats itself and interprets itself, I would say it is a truth as old, certainly, as Solomon and perhaps so old in his day that cynics mocked it and youth yawned over it—"Righteousness exalteth a nation."

That proverb leads logically to what seems to me to be the supreme values in the social sciences. Those studies humble us but they reassure and console us. They remind us that "*fortes vivere ante Agamemnona*" and ante many besides—even ante Bernard Shaw. The social sciences curb our resentment of slow time, which all our rebellious impatience will not shorten by so much as a second a century. From our researches in the social sciences we see each day a little more of the awesome splendor of the illimitable law of God. Archaeologist and paleontologist alike proclaim the mystery of the survival of man. Ice ages come and recede. Babylon spread its walls so far that even now, when you fly over the ruins, you scarcely know at which to marvel more—at the skill of those who built such

## MODERN EDUCATION

mighty defences or at the prowess of those who scaled them; but there they are, ruins, while not an hour's flight away, at Abadan, you could see the American flag and could talk to men who never had heard of Babylon. Gnosso is built, is adorned, and then suddenly is abandoned—to be visited again by men who captured the island by descending from the sky. Flinders Petrie digs into the secrets of the Nile till he has reached the stratum below which he finds no trace of man. He reviews the oft-repeated story in the *Revolutions of Civilization* and he concludes "Gradually the transformation to democracy takes place . . . Wealth continues to increase. When democracy has attained full power, the majority without capital necessarily eat up the minority and the civilization decays until the inferior population is swept away to make room for fitter people." You read his story and you ask yourself whether he is writing of two thousand years ago or of two decades hence. Nations perish; the race goes on. How awesome this is to those of us who write of military history! Wars plague mankind and produce new weapons, but never a change in the nature of the warrior. You see it magnify the good or the bad but it creates nothing that was not already there. The horror and the waste appall. Carthage is put to the sword, the very stones of the temples are overturned, and the gardens are sown in salt; but the women who are carried off to be slaves of Roman masters have short locks because they had cut off their long hair to renew the bowstrings of their city's defenders. You read it and you know that, aside from the detail of capture or relief,

## AND HUMAN VALUES

that is the story of Pamplona, of Constantinople, of Leyden, of Londonderry, of Lucknow, of Richmond, or of Stalingrad. Old Generals begin wars; young Generals end them. The initial battles are costly and tactically are mishandled. You observe it with sorrow but not with despair, because you have found it always has been so. The final school of war is combat. Strategy goes astray because it is based on mistaken intelligence; logistics prove defective. You agonize, but you expected this at the period of war you are enduring; you are confident the same mistakes will not be repeated the next year. Always you are conscious of the contingent factor in war, and always of the courage of well-trained, well-led soldiers of any race. It is, you are sure, superior force, superior equipment, and superior endurance that will win; and of your adversary as of your own son you say in Donald Hankey's fine words, "I think valor no more dies out of the heart of man than love does." If in all of this there is warning, is it not the social scientist's to proclaim; and if its human values console, is it not his high privilege to minister?

## VI

History, in repeating itself, does more than console and caution, even when the story is saddest. It was mine for almost thirty years to study a civilization here on this American continent that was brought to the arbitrament of battle and then to the ashes of defeat. I was privileged, in spirit and without their consent, to keep the company of those who had the grim and

## MODERN EDUCATION

anxious task of building from raw youth and old weapons an army that lighted its campfires on the Potomac and compassed the hills around your town of Gettysburg. I looked over the shoulder of that army's anxious commander as he wrote to Jefferson Davis of losses that were not made good and of conscripts who slipped away in the shadows. Silently I followed General Lee to the McLean House at Appomattox and I watched him as he signed surrender. Humbly I tried to ride behind him on the road from Appomattox to Washington College, Lexington, the road of my people's redemption. Years afterward, this time literally, I opened the chest in which were the military papers he had preserved through all his marches, in advance and in retreat. Among those pathetic documents I found that bit of blue paper on which he had written those words that have epitomized for me ever since the most exalted of the human values of the social sciences. I do not know by what dim candle in his headquarter's tent he wrote those sentences, or whether he penned them when his headquarter's flag was flapping proudly in pursuit, or when it was hanging wearily from its staff. It has not yet been possible to determine even, whether the words were his own or were copied from some book he read; but here they are:

"My experience of men has neither disposed me to think worse of them nor indisposed me to serve them; nor, in spite of failures which I lament, of errors which I now see and acknowledge, or of the present aspect of affairs, do I despair of the future. The truth is this: the march of Providence is so slow and our desires so

## AND HUMAN VALUES

impatient; the work of progress is so immense and our means of aiding it so feeble; the life of humanity is so long, that of the individual so brief that often we see only the ebb of the advancing wave and are thus discouraged. It is history that teaches us to hope."

Aye, it is, must be, history that teaches us to hope, even for the atomic age.



# THE WORLD EDUCATES FOR PEACE

ARTHUR H. COMPTON

**R**ECENTLY at Paris I shared in writing into the program of the United Nation's Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization a definition of peace. "Peace," so this statement reads, "is not mere absence of hostilities. It is rather a condition of mutual confidence, harmony of purpose, and co-ordination of activities in which free men and women can live a satisfactory life."

Our victory in the recent war has not brought us such peace. True peace has yet to be won. It cannot be won by fighting. Peace must grow in the minds and hearts of men.

Now is a time of great danger and of great opportunity. The danger is of drifting into a third World War so disastrous as to mean death to a considerable part of the world's population and a reversion of civilization from which recovery may take generations. The opportunity is to protect the world against war until nations can be trained and educated for lasting peace.

In spite of the obvious dangers, the fact is that now, perhaps better than ever before, there is a real chance to secure the peace that has been the dream of the ages. Whether this possibility will become a reality depends upon whether the nations want it enough to work

## AND HUMAN VALUES

earnestly toward bringing it about. The World stakes its hopes on education for peace.

### II

Our historical setting is one of a race between the development of the forces that would plunge us into war and of the growth of world-wide economic and cultural ties which will make peace so strong that war cannot return.

Let us look at this setting. There is now a pause in the world's fighting. At the moment no nation can start a war with hope of victory. For the visible future the possible protagonists see no assurance that if war breaks out they can protect their citizens against disaster. With such a balance of power, war is unlikely.

In the meantime new and mighty forces of social evolution are moving mankind toward a world community. Prominent among these forces are those of world-wide commerce and industry, of rapid and easy travel and communication, and of free flow of ideas through press and radio—forces which have been greatly strengthened by the discoveries and applications of science. Whole groups of people and large areas become specialized producers who depend largely upon other groups for supplying their needs. These forces we see growing in strength, multiplying in number, and extending more widely over the globe. They have during the past generation made the continent of North America an area having such community of interests that we recognize war as meaningless and prac-

## MODERN EDUCATION

tically impossible. With the inevitability of the forces of nature, we see this development moving toward an *integrated world* in which likewise the possibility of war will gradually disappear.

Is it possible to accelerate this trend toward a unified world so that armed conflict will become impossible before the hates, distrusts, envies, and lusts for power stemming from former conflicts bring on the dreaded holocaust of another war?

Even before the last war, such a clear-headed student of history as James Harvey Robinson could say that the forces working toward peace were so strong that, barring some political accident, there was a reasonable chance that lasting peace might already be on its way. The political accident did, however, occur with the combination of Adolf Hitler and the early mishandling of the situations raised by Japan in China and Italy in Ethiopia, and war was precipitated.

In some ways the situation is not now as favorable as when Robinson was writing in 1933. Perhaps two major rival powers are harder to control than the seven great powers of the previous period. Perhaps the rivalry between the ideologies is in sharper focus and hence more threatening. Certainly international suspicions are now more abundant, though perhaps with less reason. Yet the introduction of atomic weapons and of air attack deep into enemy territory now provides a formidable deterrent to initiating any war. For a long time ahead the potential warring nations have their internal problems that need attention and for which war is no solution. But above all, the forces working

## AND HUMAN VALUES

toward world unity have greatly developed. The advantages of world co-operation have become more evident, and the difficulties of maintaining isolation have become more apparent.

Even without special attention to international co-operation in the field of knowledge we can thus see a real chance of permanent peace emerging from our present situation. *With* active cultivation of the forces working toward peaceful adjustment, and with careful attention to the military defences necessary to prevent outbreak of war, the probability of establishing a lasting peace should be greatly improved.

It thus seems to me a fair statement that now really for perhaps the first time in history the opportunity is before us to make a peace that will last, a peace, too, that carries with it the fundamentals of freedom.

The nations have enough confidence in this possibility that they are in fact preparing for a long period without war. At the UNESCO conference last December the forty-three participating nations committed themselves to co-operation for better mutual understanding and for peaceful adjustment of their objectives and their activities. The nations are consciously preparing to educate their people for world citizenship.

### III

This education for peace has two great themes. The first is to dispel the ignorance of each other's ways which, through the long history of man, has been a common cause of suspicion and mistrust that has too often broken into war. The second theme is that the

## MODERN EDUCATION

knowledge needed for the nations to do their tasks and to work in harmony is a world-wide body of knowledge, and that it is by co-operation of all nations that this knowledge can best be gained and made available.

This program as finally adopted by the UNESCO Conference includes six major undertakings: fundamental education, revision of teaching materials, communication between peoples, science education and research, study of tensions conducive to war, and philosophic problems. The quotations I have used are from the official report.

*Fundamental education.* First is the proposed development of a world-wide program in fundamental education. Minimal educational standards will be set up. "The present educational inequality between nations represents a danger to the peace of the world, which cannot become ONE if half of it remains illiterate." The program will involve also *new* forms of education, especially for adults, in agriculture, health, and citizenship.

"The first step in this great project will be the appointment of a panel of experts, most of whom would not be members of the UNESCO staff. On invitation they will assist in the development of programs of education, making contacts with workers in the field. The central staff of UNESCO will assist in providing suitable materials, in the clarification of language difficulties, and in the utilization of all forms of instruction—books, pictures, films, and radio—which may serve the purposes of the program. Assistance will be sought in collateral fields, such as libraries and the social sci-

## AND HUMAN VALUES

ences. As the program advances, follow up work will carry the new skills of reading and writing to a fuller implementation of every day life, and further, to a growing recognition of international problems."

From the international point of view of UNESCO, "the world owes a duty to its less favored peoples, not only in their interest but in its own." And here the report of the program commission includes a statement that echoes a vigorous debate in which the chief protagonists were Sir Radhakrishnan of India and Mr. Ribnikar of Yugoslavia: "It is not necessary," says the report, "in order to recognize this duty, to assert that the evils of our time lie solely in the things of the human spirit, any more than it is necessary to assert, in order to arrive at certain other conclusions, that the roots of these evils lie solely in material conditions. It is necessary only to admit . . . that what passes in the minds of men is a reality—and a reality which may well affect the great issues of peace and war, of life and death."

*Revision of teaching materials.* Of closely related intent is the second major project, that of a comprehensive revision of textbooks and related teaching materials. It is important not only that people learn about each other, but also that they learn the truth, undistorted to create prejudice. "UNESCO is not the policeman of the mind nor the censor of the imagination, but it does have the duty of calling to the attention of the nations of the world *any misuse* of the facilities of teaching which it considers dangerous to the peace."

## MODERN EDUCATION

This project calls for a clearinghouse for the collection and dissemination of information on the revision of textbooks, starting with those which are most commonly used. It is assumed that it is UNESCO's responsibility to report to the United Nations and to the world at large any instances of the misuse of textbooks which might be considered by its own General Conference as a danger to peace.

In this task we see the effort by the educators of the world to bring into the realm of the minds of men the discipline necessary to retain order and peace.

*Communication between peoples.* The third item on UNESCO's program is one that must eventually become of enormous scope. Now it is in the pilot plant stage, or as William Benton would say, in the "fledgling" stage of development.

Communication between peoples in the modern world is not limited to the traditional processes of education. We have mentioned the revolutionary technical developments that are bringing the world closer together. Among the most important of these are those related to the press, the radio, the motion pictures, and similar more recent developments. Now for the first time a planetary culture can be developed. This is merely because now for the first time people can talk with each other around the world. UNESCO proposes to use these new means of mass communication, and to work toward removing the obstacles in the way of their full and most effective employment.

In describing this project, I can do no better than follow the statement made by Archibald MacLeish as

## AND HUMAN VALUES

Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Program Commission.

a. "The first of these proposals is that for the establishment of a world-wide network for radio broadcasting and reception. UNESCO will not embark immediately upon an undertaking of such scope and large cost. It will, however, undertake forthwith a study of the possibility of such an undertaking with a view to the presentation to next year's General Conference of UNESCO of a practicable plan for action."

Without waiting for the far-reaching developments for this study, specific proposals are now scheduled for the establishment of an international radio forum and a "world university of the air" in which, within the framework of existing facilities, subjects of international interest can be discussed.

Closely related is the survey to be undertaken of the adequacy of existing channels to meet the world's needs for communication. These channels include the press, films, radio, the telephone and telegraph, the postal system, etc. In some areas of the world these channels are more satisfactory than in others. In the light of such a study, it is thought that proposals can be suggested that will make it possible for the peoples of the world to share more fully their thoughts and experiences.

b. Combined with these positive proposals for the development of existing channels of communication and the establishment of a truly planetary system, there are what might be called negative or curative proposals for removing barriers that now obstruct the flow of communication. In this task UNESCO will work



## MODERN EDUCATION

closely with other agencies of the United Nations, such as the Economic and Social Council and its organs.

c. Similar barriers to increased understanding among the peoples of the world exist also in connection with libraries and museums, books and works of art. I was impressed by the following statement which represents the considered opinion of the world's leading representatives of the cultural arts assembled at Paris. It represents an appalling indictment of the modern world: "Never before in the history of the world," they tell us, "has the freedom of the creative artist to satisfy the fundamental need of his time been so restricted as it is restricted now by commercial practices and by censorious suppression." Is ours indeed a cultural world? The statement goes further, "Never before in the history of the world have there been as many people hungry for books who lack the means for satisfying their hunger."

These are things we can do something about. The cultural health of the world demands remedial action. Among the remedial projects proposed are studies of discriminatory and unduly high postal rates, of bureaucratic customs formalities, and of other similar obstacles to the movement of books and other materials of communication. UNESCO will investigate ways in which conditions affecting the livelihood of the creative artist can be improved. It will co-operate with other agencies in safeguarding the art and culture of non-industrial peoples from debasement and extinction.

d. Further to make available more widely the best of the thoughts of all men everywhere is the proposal

## AND HUMAN VALUES

to establish a central interlibrary loan system by which readers in any part of the world may have access, either in original or in copy, to the printed materials in any library in any country. The use of photographic reproduction of such materials is conceived of upon a scale never before undertaken. To some extent at least it will thus be possible to re-establish the world's resources of cultural materials that were destroyed by the war.

*Science education and research.* The first important activities of UNESCO must necessarily be in fields which are welcomed by all nations. They should also lead demonstrably toward a peaceful adjustment of world society. These conditions are most fully realized in science and its applications. UNESCO has accordingly planned an active program in science.

Where two nations have ideological differences that bring danger of war, many types of interchange of ideas are unwelcome or subject to suspicion. This applies in particular to the use of radio and the press, to the control of basic education, and to religious and philosophical thought. No such difficulty exists in the field of science. Since for securing the peace of the world it is precisely between nations with such differences that it becomes most important to obtain understanding and co-operation, scientific education and research become leading aspects of UNESCO's task.

Its science program includes three important steps, a) Rehabilitation of science education in devastated countries, b) International interchange and conferences of scientists and technologists, and c) Promotion of

## MODERN EDUCATION

research programs which are of international concern.

The rehabilitation of scientific activities will be undertaken by surveying the actual needs and by stimulating the creation of agencies to collect and distribute needed equipment and books. Also the enabling of scientists to go for a limited period from exhausted countries to those where scientific study is active will serve to keep alive the scientific thought of these countries while their own institutions are being re-established. The result of such aid to science education will be to make possible the healthy recovery in these areas of normal activity in the technological industries.

Experience has shown great value for all concerned in such interchanges of personnel. While some of the interchanges will be financed directly by UNESCO, others will be based on grants given for administration by UNESCO, and yet others will merely be co-ordinated or in some way facilitated by UNESCO's staff.

Typical of the active research that will be sponsored by UNESCO is that of the effects of various types of prolonged malnutrition on the large populations of India and China. Plans are getting started for correcting these nutrition faults, and the chance to gain the information so valuable to the future planning for a nation's food may soon be gone. On this task the nutritional, agricultural, and other experts from many nations will co-operate, under the general sponsorship of UNESCO. A related program is the study of the conditions for satisfactory living in the Equatorial forest zone. As a concrete beginning, UNESCO will co-ordinate the researches by specialists from many na-

## AND HUMAN VALUES

tions on the resources and conditions of life in the great Amazon forest. The result of such a study should be to make available to normal living great areas of the world which now are scarcely usable.

As we have noted before, one of the effects of the growth of science and technology is to make the welfare of each country depend upon the prosperity of its neighbors. Another noteworthy effect is that of fostering the growth of a group of world-minded citizens who will be placed in influential positions in all countries. This becomes of especial significance in the relations between the United States and Russia, where other methods for reaching an understanding are extraordinarily difficult but the channels for co-operation in science remain open.

*Study of tensions conducive to war.* The remaining two major projects of UNESCO, though also of high importance, I shall mention but briefly. UNESCO proposes to sponsor a scientific study of the tensions conducive to war. This will include studies of nationalism and internationalism, the pressure of populations, and the effect of technological progress on the adequacy of national governments to provide for the economic well-being of peoples. It will call for a new type of co-operation between social scientists, anthropologists, geographers, and psychologists. It will demand, as the work progresses, the development of new methods of investigation and report. In such an elaborate undertaking, recourse will be had.

*Philosophic problems.* Finally, it is proposed that UNESCO examine the philosophic problems faced by

## MODERN EDUCATION

the modern age. UNESCO must not commit itself to a dogmatic position in any field, or to any philosophy which would exclude other basic philosophies directed to the human and humane ends to which UNESCO, by its constitution, is devoted. The philosophic problem of UNESCO is rather that of finding common ground for understanding and agreement between diverse philosophies and religions. This is a new problem for philosophy and one which is vitally related to the cause of peace. This problem will be the central theme for a conference of philosophers to be held under the auspices of UNESCO toward the end of this year.

As chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Program Commission, it fell to the lot of Archibald MacLeish to present this program to the General Conference of UNESCO. In doing so he made the following notable statement:

"Here, in our opinion, is a program for common action to construct in the minds of men such defenses of the peace as the minds of men can maintain. If it is possible in the present dark and lowering atmosphere of cynicism, suspicion, and despair for men to agree upon a common program, they should, we think, be able to agree on this. In the final count, in the last determination, we trust our power to be men. As men—as thinking men—as men who think, believe, and have the will to act—we can agree together on the end of peace. Agreeing on this end, we should be able to agree that there are steps whereby the end can be approached. In the high confidence that the projects here

## AND HUMAN VALUES

proposed are projects which can bring us nearer to the hoped-for goal, we put these programs in your hands."

We who shared in shaping this program believe that as it is carried out it will indeed construct within the minds of men substantial defences of peace. With the many differences that forty different nations with as many different interests could have, they were able to agree that here are steps toward the goal of peace.

### IV

It was amazing to me to see how in this program every nation found that its own special interests were largely met. This is the real test of the value of international collaboration: does it give each participating nation what it wants?

The primary concern of the United States was peace. The whole enterprise of UNESCO is thus tailor made to fit our needs. Our concern with peace reflects the fact that of the participating nations the U. S. bears the chief responsibility for maintaining defences that will protect against armed aggression, and any reliable assurance of peace that UNESCO can develop will relieve by that much the need for expensive and otherwise useless military preparations. The program that I have discussed tells how we have moved toward this chief objective.

In addition, however, the U. S. will gain from this intellectual co-operation in many ways. The world store of basic scientific knowledge will be increased. On this world store of knowledge we depend for the

## MODERN EDUCATION

continued growth of American industry. An improved level of world health must result, which will carry with it better health in our own country. The prosperity of our neighbor nations will be improved by the more adequate education that will enable them to share more fully in modern industrial life. Their increased prosperity will improve our own economy. Our own cultural level will enjoy the improvement that comes from a freer interchange of ideas with a world that also knows and appreciates the things of true value.

Next to ourselves the British had the keenest interest in the applications of the work of UNESCO toward peace. They shared with the French, however, a more intense concern with maintaining their international prestige in the field of science and culture. One British delegate put his views about UNESCO bluntly. His country had lost its political importance with the coming of age of the members of the Commonwealth. It had lost its economic supremacy in the Second World War when it had to strip itself of foreign investments and relinquish international financial control. It was no longer a prime military power. The only field left in which it could dominate was the cultural.

Similar was the comment of a French delegate. He opposed having others than Europeans on the Executive Board of UNESCO, for, he said, "The European nations are the ones that have the culture. They should be the ones to distribute it to the rest of the world." Considering themselves thus as its leaders, they want to interest the world in the intellectual aspects of life, and are happy to have Paris serve in a concrete sense

## AND HUMAN VALUES

through UNESCO as the cultural capitol of the world.

The devastated nations are frankly looking for help to enable them to recover their place in the economic picture. They see revived education as essential to this recovery, and sharing in UNESCO's activities as a way of interesting the world in helping their situation.

### V

Czechoslovakia and Poland entered the activities of UNESCO without reserve. Yugoslavia was much more guarded, for fear of becoming involved in commitments that might become embarrassing in her relations with Russia. They all showed a clear desire, however, to work with UNESCO. Mrs. McCormick phrased the impression which we all caught. "In these delegations I sensed a real, almost pathetic, eagerness to get away from political controversy and find a common ground where they can meet freely and work together. The new isolationism is mainly mental and ideological," she adds, "and my experience here convinced me that UNESCO could be a powerful battering ram against the ersatz walls erected between peoples by force and fear." These peoples, like the "thinking men of all nations, want a frontierless world of the mind."

With the nations thus all apparently convinced that participation in UNESCO will serve their interests, what may we expect regarding Russia? The best indication to my mind was the attitude of the Yugoslav delegation. On behalf of the Communist nations, Mr. Ribnikar regretted that UNESCO's program was



## MODERN EDUCATION

not positive enough in its opposition to activities directed against peace and international co-operation. He thought that UNESCO should bring its propaganda to bear upon social groups whose interest it was to draw nations into war, and that to hamper the spread of false news it should control political information.

In spite of these reservations my own impression was that Ribnikar saw that UNESCO was getting off to a strong start. He seemed to see also that its activities were destined to become of such advantage to the participating nations that no country could afford to remain outside its orbit. Thus apparently Russia would be in the awkward position of having to join the organization after its rules, personnel, and program had been set without her help.

When we ask, "what is our place in the program of UNESCO," the first thing we must remember is that politically the United States is the opposite pole to Russia. Indeed the American Midwest is the opposite pole to Moscow. While we have reacted toward the conservative side since the war, the rest of the world has become more liberal. The form of democracy that France seeks is strongly affected by Russian thought. Britain, though with a Socialist government, is more closely linked to the United States. Within Russia herself the equality of peoples sought by communism has, it is reliably reported, given way to the most highly stratified society now present in the world, where the ruling group scorns the views of the common people as inconsequential, and protects them from outside ideas to keep them satisfied. We on the contrary fear

## AND HUMAN VALUES

the power of a partially informed democracy, and would protect our established institutions by keeping away from our people those who would tell why others have turned left instead of right.

The fact is that our part of the world is extraordinarily well insulated from the international flow of ideas. This insulation does not need to be intentional on our part. The United States is separated from European and Asiatic cultures by vast oceans. Our coastal cities look across the seas and listen to the travelers who visit them. The visitors are rare, however, who filter through to the Mississippi Valley. We are rightly proud of the distinctive culture that we have developed. It has given us prosperity and power, and perhaps freedom. But we must remember that as viewed from the rest of the world, next to Moscow the most likely place where ideas may develop that lead to war is in the American Midwest. We may know that our minds are intent on peace. The rest of the world does not know it. Moscow claims that it is working for peace, and points toward our press as exciting to war.

In the inimitable phrasing of Mrs. McCormick, "Sooner or later we shall have to tackle the bristling question of freedom of information, which is not only the condition of all other freedoms, but of any genuine international life. UNESCO is evidently the organ of 'peaceful penetration' in a field as full of hurdles as a steepchase course."

Clearly Russia is concerned lest in participating in UNESCO she may become committed to exposing her people to capitalist propaganda. If Russia were a

## MODERN EDUCATION

member, would we not reciprocate with a fear lest UNESCO serve as a channel for the flow of Communism into our country? Of course the answer is that no nation in UNESCO loses its right to keep its doors closed to anything. Only as it is persuaded that opening the door to the free flow of certain types of knowledge is to its own advantage need it share in that part of UNESCO's enterprise. A United Nations organization whose central concern is international co-operation in education nevertheless becomes a menace to those ideas which rely for survival on protection from outside thought. By the same token it offers new opportunity for the development of those ideas which thrive in the light of open discussion.

The point is, UNESCO is no innocent plaything. It is the channel to world thought. If we want isolation we should drop UNESCO now and postpone the day when world thought will be further forced upon us. If, however, we want to take seriously our responsibility as world leaders which recent events have forced upon us, if we want to strengthen and enrich our own lives with the knowledge and culture of the rest of the world, if indeed we want to live as citizens of the world, full participation in UNESCO's program is essential.

## VI

We have defined peace as "a condition of mutual confidence, harmony of purpose, and co-ordination of activities in which free men and women can live a satisfactory life." Science has given a world framework

## AND HUMAN VALUES

in which it is technically possible for such peace to be attained. But the means by which we may hope to gain mutual confidence and harmony of purpose and action is not science but rather education regarding human values. Such education leading toward common human goals must become world-wide if we are to have true peace.

After the last session of the UNESCO Conference we were holding a "nineteenth hole" discussion of the outcome. In spite of setbacks, most of us were cautiously optimistic. Then up spoke the "realist." "We say we are educating for peace," he began. "We want to prevent war. But where will war occur if not between the United States and Russia? And Russia is not even sharing our discussions. To me," he continued, "everything indicates that Russia is letting these innocuous discussions go on, knowing that they will pacify the democratic nations, while she continues to develop her plans to take over control of the world."

The rest of us tried to show him that far from being innocuous, the education the nations are planning is a source of strength needed for the democracies to resist the infection of communism. Finally the youngest member of the group expressed the thought of all of us. "The truly realistic fact is," he said, "that our future depends not only on what we are but also on what we aspire to become."

This is indeed the true summary. Our present setting is one of active rivalry and struggle for advantages.

But men are hungry for freedom of thought and world-wide meeting of minds that UNESCO offers.

## MODERN EDUCATION

The governments of the various nations see real assurance that participation in UNESCO's activities will meet their needs. The world looks to it with hope as a means of establishing a lasting peace that will give freedom.

At last, with the passing of the centuries, we have the possibility of minds meeting minds around the globe. We recognize our need of each other's help, the usefulness to us of the knowledge the world can give. We catch a vision of helping the world to live the more abundant life upon which we ourselves hope to enter. Now, if ever, is the opportunity to shape a peace that may be permanent. The great forces of nature and of human growth are moving us in that direction. If peace is to be won, these forces must succeed before the other powerful forces of hate and rivalry and lust for power lead us into the holocaust of an atomic war. In spite of high hurdles that must be cleared, we see the real possibility of reaching the goal at the end of the course. Here is a race worth hard training to win!

# RELIGION AND EDUCATION

HENRY P. VAN DUSEN

**T**HE late Archbishop of Canterbury, William Temple, by common acknowledgment the foremost Christian thinker and statesman of our time, opens a masterly review of the development of modern thought with this semifacetious but profound remark: "If I were asked what was the most disastrous moment in the history of Europe I should be strongly tempted to say it was that period of leisure when René Descartes, having no claims to meet, remained for a whole day 'shut up alone in a stove.'"<sup>1</sup>

Surely, such decisive importance can hardly be attributed to a single individual, however influential. But Descartes is generally recognized as "the father of modern thought." More than any other person, he determined the issues, and the terms for their solution, which have preoccupied the ablest thinkers to our own day. His significance, however, lies less in his direct influence than in his representative character, less in the fact that he was the creator of the Modern Mind than in the fact that he was so largely its symbol. It is Descartes as precursor of the Modern Age who merits our attention.

<sup>1</sup>William Temple, *Nature, Man and God*, "The Cartesian Faux-pas," p. 57.

## MODERN EDUCATION

Descartes' personal dilemma, and his way out of it, are a familiar tale. Intense study, especially in mathematics, had embogged his youthful mind in complete skepticism. The absolute precision of mathematics furnished him with an exacting standard for truth which no generally accepted facts of nature or history could fully meet. His mind could rest satisfied with nothing less than mathematical certainty; but such certainty appeared beyond his reach. He struggled in a morass of unrelieved doubt. In despair, he resolved to shut himself off completely—from all tradition, all association with his fellow men, even all contact with the external world—and in absolute solitude and isolation, to search his own interior thoughts for ideas so clear, so coercive, that they could not possibly be doubted. Hence, the day of solitary reflection in a capacious French stove.

Examining the contents of his own mind, Descartes ultimately came upon one idea so clear, distinct, inescapable that he could not elude its compulsion. It was *the idea of himself*—not himself as a total organism of body and mind and emotions, but himself as a mind thinking. "Cogito: ergo sum," he cried. "I think; there is someone here thinking. Therefore, I am; I exist." From this primal certitude, himself as a thinking being, Descartes sought to build up all knowledge.

Pursuing his introspection further, he fastened next upon the idea of a *Perfect Being*—also, to him, an idea so clear, and so clearly not of his own origination, that it likewise could not be questioned; he now felt sure of the existence of God.

## AND HUMAN VALUES

From these two basic certainties—himself and God—he moved on to *assume* the reality of the *external world*, of Nature, of his own body. He felt confident that the Perfect Deity would not allow him to be deceived in his *impression* that there was a world beyond his own thinking. But this was merely an inference from the trustworthiness of God. Descartes could thus affirm three realities—himself, God, Nature—God being the link between the other two.

Descartes' somewhat fantastic ruminations seem at far remove from our times, and from our topic. We have said that he is important partly because of his direct influence upon the development of thought since, but much more as a forerunner and a representative of the Modern Mind. As we might expect, there is no place where the characteristic features of the modern outlook find clearer expression than in our academic communities, in the seats of scholarship and learning. Let us make note of five of these first as they were anticipated in René Descartes, and then as they appear in educational philosophy and practice today.

1. The *perspective* which Descartes chose for his intellectual quest was *solitude, in isolation from Nature, from history, from society*. Here is a philosophical source-spring of the *Individualism* which has been such a marked feature of the Modern Period.

And Descartes was resolved to discover secure truth within his own mind, without conscious contact with the external world. This is the root premise of all *Rationalism, Subjectivism, and Intellectualism*.



## MODERN EDUCATION

The marriage of *Individualism* and *Intellectualism*, both basic in the Cartesian perspective, have bred the *Egocentrism*, the *Anthropocentrism* of Modern Man.

Descartes himself was the most extreme of individualists and intellectualists. The picture of the little mathematical philosopher, shut up within his solitary retreat—seemingly independent of Nature, and deliberately divorced from responsible corporate relations with his fellow men, with all their annoyances, their obligations, their frustrations, but also with all their enrichments, their satisfactions, their fulfillments (as Temple suggests, "with no claims to meet"—is the perfect prototype of the modern self-centered individualist. His chosen position was the attempt to create ideal conditions for the Rationalist-Individualist enterprise.

The dominance of this perspective within modern thought requires no proof. For illustration we do not need to look beyond the world of learning—the typical individualism of academicians, shielded from demanding social relationships and responsibilities, cherishing a life of privileged security and exemption from public obligations and annoyances. But a similar ideal has lured almost every typical son of the modern day; he has coveted an existence of unfettered personal independence and self-determination, made possible through the possession of wealth.

Actually, Descartes' imagined isolation was belied by more acute attention to the facts. Even in his retreat he was divorced from neither Nature nor society. There were cracks in that stove through which air penetrated to his lungs. Had this supply of ozone been for two

## AND HUMAN VALUES

moments withdrawn, or had a capricious Sovereign of despised Nature wished to rebuke his disdain by altering momentarily the complex of natural law in accordance with which our bodies live, Descartes' mind would have ceased its self-important cogitation like a pleasant dream under the stern summons of an alarm clock. And all the while the solitary thinker was reveling in self-absorbed speculation, some faithful cook was wrestling with pots and pans for his supper, and the vast network of society was toiling through its accustomed routine to make possible his privileged ruminations.

Descartes' perspective was fundamentally false. So, likewise, is the modern point of view in the measure that it perpetuates Individualism and Intellectualism. Thought divorced from its dependence upon body, upon Nature, is a fanciful abstraction; therefore, no safe guide to knowledge of Reality. Man divorced from dependence upon his fellows, upon society, is a self-deluded abstraction; therefore, no safe guide for the direction of human affairs.

2. Descartes assumed that every seeker after truth should begin his quest *de novo*, without reference to previous discoveries. Note how that assumption, likewise, conditions the intellectual enterprise in our own day. What self-respecting student has not passed through the momentous episode, traditionally in sophomore year in college but today more probably in high school, when he has felt obligated to divest himself of every inherited belief, every common sense assumption, and, with no conscious presuppositions, set forth

## MODERN EDUCATION

upon his personal search for truth. In the wider corporate scene, this is the very essence of *Modernism*—disdain of the wisdom of the past, assumption of the authority of the latest; the cult of contemporaneity.

In espousing this approach, Modern Man has thought himself a devotee of scientific method. In fact, this is the direct obverse of true scientific method. Every scientist begins with shelves crowded with accumulated and tested discoveries of his predecessors. He assumes them correct unless and until they are proved mistaken, although he intends to reverify their validity repeatedly. He aims to build upon and go beyond them to new discoveries made possible only because of the funded wisdom of the centuries. Moreover, as Eddington points out, new scientific truth seldom discredits and discards old beliefs. More characteristically, it embraces them and sets them within a wider and truer context—very much as in putting together a jigsaw puzzle, parts of the picture already pieced together are incorporated within a larger whole; a patch of blue, originally diagnosed as a parasol, is next thought to be a bit of sea, but finally takes its true place within the vast expanse of the Heavens.<sup>1</sup>

3. Descartes was a devotee of mathematics. As we have said, his mind could rest satisfied only with conclusions sustained by the absolute precision and finality of mathematics. In this objective, he was truly the precursor of Modern Science. And it is a platitude that the most important key to the Modern World, both its life

<sup>1</sup> A. S. Eddington, *The Nature of the Physical World*, p. 35a.

## AND HUMAN VALUES

and its thought, has been the dominance of science, a fact for which we may coin the word "*Scientism*." The great preoccupation of Modern Thought has been to agree upon the meaning of science for men's outlook. The main issues of debate have sprung from seeming conflicts between the conclusions of science and previously generally accepted assumptions. The ruling purpose, often unconscious, of the regnant philosophies has been to develop a view of things thoroughly harmonious with the conclusions and outlook of science, a "scientific philosophy."

Lest there be a moment's suspicion that we are tempted to deprecate the advance of science or to rouse the corpse of the old science-religion controversy, let us acknowledge at once and in one sweeping sentence our unqualified acceptance of the tested conclusions of Modern Science and our immeasurable debt to science's enrichment of human existence. We are merely concerned to note the larger impact of science upon Modern Thought and Modern Life. That impact has been threefold—through the *goal* of science, through the *methodology* of science, and through the more general point of view of science, what we may call the *scientific outlook*.

Following Descartes, the aim of every science has been an exactitude and objectivity and finality modeled upon mathematics; more than that, the reduction of its data to mathematical symbols. But mathematical precision can deal only with unalterable relations; that is to say, with mechanical relations; that is, upon the assumption of a mechanistic universe. Such

## MODERN EDUCATION

mechanism has been the avowed or covert presupposition of every science which sought mathematical finality.

This goal has determined the *method* of science—analysis, description, classification, generalization—the familiar technique of the laboratory. The truth supremely prized is that which can be caught within the meshes of this particular net—those facts which admit of complete analysis and classification as instances of a general type.

Goal and method created the more general but also more pervasive influence of science upon all Modern Thought through what may be called the *scientific outlook*. Inevitably, it focused attention upon these aspects of human experience and reality with which science was prepared most readily to deal, to the neglect or denial of other aspects which elude scientific instruments. That means a concentration upon the *general* rather than the *individual*, the *universal* rather than the *particular*, the *elementary* rather than the *mature* (witness, the preoccupation of experimental psychology, especially in its early stages, with rats, guinea pigs, and infants), the *uniform* rather than the *unique*, the *familiar* rather than the *original*, the *quantitative* rather than the *qualitative*, the *commonplace* rather than the *delicate*, the *rare*, the *meaningful*, the *profound*. In brief, it nurtures a perspective directly antipodal to that which the nobler thinkers of the ages had made their own; and a preoccupation with data at precisely the opposite pole from those which the great philosophies, not to speak of art and religion, had learned to recognize as most significant.

## AND HUMAN VALUES

4. Closely related to both Individualism and what we have ventured to call "Scientism" is *Specialization*—concentration of attention upon some one problem, or phase of a problem, to the neglect of its organic connections and its larger setting. Specialization—so essential to scientific advance, so fruitful of increased knowledge. Specialization—so stunting to large-mindedness, so fatal to comprehension of the *whole* truth, that is, the real truth.

This, again, is one of the most obvious and omnipresent features of our life today. It is a principal curse of Modern Industrialization, in which each workman has responsibility for a smaller and smaller fragment of the total process, less and less awareness of the whole to which he contributes so seemingly insignificant a part. It is a striking characteristic—many believe, a regrettable characteristic—of Modern Medicine, in which each practitioner deals with a single organ or function, none with the organism in its entirety, with the patient in his total being.

Of Specialization, also, our academic communities furnish extreme illustration. Witness the familiar jibe at the college professor as one who "knows more and more about less and less." And Whitehead's more considered and devastating indictment: "The increasing departmentalization of universities during the past hundred years, however necessary for administrative purposes, tends to trivialize the mentality of the teaching profession."<sup>1</sup> One must, I fear, add, "not only the

<sup>1</sup>A. N. Whitehead, *Nature and Life*, p. 16.

## MODERN EDUCATION

mentality of the teaching profession, but hardly less the mentality of those taught."

All of these marks of modern thought (Individualism, Intellectualism, Modernism, Scientism, Specialization) find supreme expression in the present-day university curriculum and the assumptions which underlie it. That curriculum reminds one of nothing so much as a cafeteria where unnumbered tasty intellectual delicacies are strung along a moving belt for free choice without benefit of dietary balance or completeness. Dr. William Adams Brown once called it "the bargain-counter theory of education." The prevailing assumption, plainly testified by the structure of the curriculum and the manner of teaching, even when not openly avowed, is that knowledge consists of countless fragments of truth, spread forth higgledy-piggledy, to be savored and swallowed like so many morsels of intellectual pabulum. It stands in radical contrast to the traditional assumption of the organic interrelatedness and unity of truth. And the result in the mind of the student? All too often, obesity or mental indigestion or, it may be, malnutrition and even pernicious intellectual anaemia. But is that the character of truth of which human knowledge is the apprehension? Or is Truth, as the ancient tradition assumed, an organic unity, each several part being what it is by virtue of its place within the whole?

5. Lastly, Descartes distinguished sharply thought (*res cogitans*) from matter (*res extensa*). He was unable to solve the relation between the ideas of Nature in

## AND HUMAN VALUES

his own mind and the reality of the external world, or even between his own mind of whose existence he felt certain through direct intuition and his own body whose existence he could only infer through appeal to the trustworthiness of God Who would not mislead him in his impression that his mind inhabited a body. Later thinkers could not rest satisfied in the resolution of the dilemma by appeal to Deity. God as connecting link dropped out. Thus Descartes bequeathed to his successors a world riven into two disparate and unrelated realms—matter and spirit, body and mind. In direct influence upon subsequent thought, this was Descartes' most determinative legacy. Dualism is the most persistent thread through all speculation since. In its later development it tended to become the dualism of facts and values, of Nature and ideals, of science and the great humanistic interests of mankind—art, philosophy, friendship, no less than religion.

### II

Individualism, Intellectualism, Modernism, Scientism, Specialization, Dualism—these have been the dominant characteristics of the Modern Outlook, the outlook of which we today are, albeit often unwittingly and unconsciously, the heirs. Every one of these characteristics has profound meaning for the two great interests which furnish the foci of our theme—education and religion. These characteristics supply the larger background for our consideration of religion in American education, to which we now turn.



## MODERN EDUCATION

Here, a word of more limited and immediate historical orientation is essential. We may usefully distinguish three successive epochs which may be captioned "the Background," "the Foreground," and "the Present Situation."

1. *The Background* of the present American educational scene is the period of its initial beginnings. As we well know, higher education in the United States was originally almost exclusively under Christian auspices. Colleges were mainly of two types. Earliest were the institutions which have since developed into the great privately endowed universities. Most of them were founded primarily as training schools for the leadership of the churches—like Harvard College, "lest New England be cursed with an illiterate ministry!" Until quite recently, their presidents were usually ordained clergymen.

The other type comprised the so-called "Church Colleges"—much smaller institutions scattered in every corner of the land, founded by individual religious communions in order that the youth of their memberships might have the privilege of the higher learning, to be furnished them in an avowedly and vigorously Christian setting. Most of the institutions of this type still retain some church connection.

Only in the second period did secular higher education attain significant proportions. Generally speaking, until less than half a century ago, the relation of religion to collegiate education in America was twofold. Religion was the parent and sponsor of education. And

## AND HUMAN VALUES

religion was the keystone of the educational arch, the determining factor in educational theory and practice. This was precisely as most Americans wished. The role of religion in the education of their children exactly mirrored the importance they professed to give it in their own lives.

2. In the middle epoch, developments in education continued to parallel those in national life as a whole. The most striking feature was rapid expansion. As recently as 1907, students in colleges and universities numbered about 300,000. Thirty years later, there were over four times as many. Such increases in clientele could be cared for only by a mushroom growth and multiplication of institutions, of varied sizes and types, under a variety of auspices, in every section of the land.

A second striking feature was the speedy secularization of education. Gigantic state schools supported by public funds, usually with no religious acknowledgment whatever, now harbor a majority of the college youth. Meantime, the original, privately endowed universities have sloughed off every vestige of ecclesiastical control or church connection. In many instances, their deference to religion, if any, is largely a dutiful and somewhat formal memorial to a respected past. Very generally, the "Church Colleges" are increasingly embarrassed and uncomfortable in their religious obligations. No longer is religion the keystone in the arch of truth, but rather one brick among many, and a brick for which no very logical or satisfactory or permanent place within the main structure has been discovered.

## MODERN EDUCATION

With mercurial changes in the dimensions of American higher education have gone kaleidoscopic developments in educational theory and practice. These were partly due to the emergence of the Modern Mind which we analyzed above. More importantly, however, they reflected changes, not in prevailing philosophies, but in the ideals and habits of American life. Men always attribute disproportionate influence to intellectual factors, to trends of thought. They forget that that which determines both individual and corporate outlooks far more than theory is always the actual character of the practical world of affairs which surrounds and moulds both. This is especially true in this land of ours. With us more than with most peoples, action precedes thought; practice dictates principle; what we do determines what we believe.

The new educational philosophy was born of the times. Its presuppositions, norms, and objectives mirrored the public mind. It echoed the typical American's glorification of the individual, his disdain of the past, his trust in science as mankind's Messiah, his unchallengable certitude of the fated prosperity and progress of his nation, his estimate of the true values of life, his interest in gadgets and techniques, his religious unconcern, his inveterate optimism, and above all his unshakable confidence in man's power to know and to do—in brief, his this-worldly perspective.

Thus has something like a revolution in American higher education occurred within a single generation. As in the first epoch, the place of religion in the education of their children accurately registers the position

## AND HUMAN VALUES

which most Americans concede religion in their own lives. As in the earlier period, education reflects the dominant convictions and desires of the national mind.

And the youth who have been coming up to the colleges? They are grandchildren of a pioneering ancestry but children of the masterful monarchs of prosperity. In considerable numbers they are children of parents who enjoyed but limited education, who have achieved some measure of comfort and wealth but neither knowledge nor culture, and who now intend to purchase for their sons and daughters privileges which they were denied. These youth are boys and girls bearing in their bodies and minds the solid resources of their pioneer forebears, feeling within themselves the restless and puzzling energies of youth, discovering themselves thrust down in the midst of the bewildering fascination of a great university campus, their minds quickened to activity by the scintillating panegyrics of clever but shallow young instructors, their emotions stimulated to dangerously unruly pitch by the hectic speed of life about them, by the turbulent energies of life within, and by the continuous allurements of suggestion on every hand. They are intellectual children of the intellectual *nouveau riche*—products of an age which has absorbed contemporary information all out of proportion to its equipment to understand it, to interpret it, to appraise it, and to assimilate it; reflections of a culture which is glittering, impressive, self-confident, but set shallowly in foundations and perspectives which could give it depth and truth and significance.

The more thoughtful of these youth are not un-

## MODERN EDUCATION

aware of their situation, or deceived as to its causes. Let us listen to two students from two of our oldest and strongest eastern universities, both men of outstanding ability and campus leadership. One declares:

"We of the younger generation grew up in a 'practical', 'rational' world. It was so very practical that there was nothing in which it could believe; it was so very rational that it rationalized its way into an unruffled view of its own destruction . . .

"It might be expected that in acquiring a liberal education, a group of young men might find ideas and ideals to which they could cling with courage and conviction. But such seems not to be the case. Perhaps nowhere is there so much lip service paid to democratic ideals and so little stern devotion to these ideals as in the American colleges. The question forces itself upon us: What are we here for and what is a liberal education striving toward?"

The other student offers an analysis so closely wrought that spotty quotation and condensation emasculate its argument. After reminding the older generation of the framework of *their* upbringing—traditional Christianity and democracy, the Bible, church, the divinity of Christ, eternal principles of right and wrong, the existence of the human soul, a personal God and life after death, loyalty to country, man's inalienable rights—the writer poses his question: "But what about us, the youth of America? What have we been taught to revere?" "When *our elders* refer to

## AND HUMAN VALUES

eternal verities, absolutist ethics, *we* are likely to recall the lesson your instructors in sociology have driven home—that morals are relative to time and place, that what is good in one society is bad in another . . . Have we not gleaned from your professors of natural science, philosophy, and ancient history that religions are the product of myth and superstition and that men create gods in their own image? . . . Biology now conceives of man as one species of mammal . . . Free will is at odds with the basic assumption of modern science—determinism . . . Little of the learning we absorb includes value judgments.” Then follow his queries, direct implications of the University’s teaching:—“If men are but animals, why not treat them as such? If man is a slave to determinism, incapable of free choice, what is the value of the ballot, trial by jury, and civil liberties in general? . . . Personally I fail to understand how you can expect us to become ardent Christians and democrats when the vital postulates on which these faiths are supposed to rest are daily undermined in the classroom . . . Isn’t it palpably obvious that the root of the trouble lies in an apparent contradiction between the implications of our studies and the ideals we are expected to revere? Of course we are apathetic, discontent, reluctant to assume the responsibility of thinking and acting. Of course we live solely in the present, without visions of the future, without any firm convictions, hiding under a mask of conventional behavior the ‘futilitarianism’ the more thoughtful of us clearly recognize, the less thoughtful profoundly sense . . . We, the young, are the American tragedy.”

# MODERN EDUCATION

## III

Thus we are brought to the heart of our subject—the *Present Situation* as to the place of spiritual values within American education.

In the past few years, something which may fairly be characterized as a revolution has quietly been taking its rise in the underlying philosophy of higher education in the United States.

It was foreshadowed by desperate and almost frantic measures advocated in the years immediately before the recent War in three of our foremost universities. They shared a common aim—to overtake the fatal inadequacies just suggested. Behind at least two of these three proposals for radical innovation pressed insistent student agitation, welling up from profound undergraduate unrest over the jumbled and meaningless chaos of the modern curriculum.

One proposal, by a Yale man at Chicago, was to superimpose upon the entire curriculum the strait jacket of a rehabilitated mediaeval synthesis.

A second was the introduction at Harvard of "roving professors," omniscient purveyors of learning, moving from one field of knowledge to another and vaulting the chasms and barricades which separate their respective custodians, as though in this fashion the University could suggest the unity of truth which the specialized teaching in the various divisions so largely denies.

The third, at Princeton, was the inauguration, on the insistence of younger instructors in the various departments of the Humanities, of a new Department of

## AND HUMAN VALUES

Religion, to present the Christian tradition as the common foundation of western history, art, literature, and philosophy and therefore the only appropriate principle of integration of the educational process.

These were anticipations of a movement which has advanced on both a wider and deeper front under the solemnizing impetus of wartime self-examination.

Just two years ago, the University of California in Los Angeles circularized forty-seven colleges and universities to discover whether they were contemplating curricular revisions in the postwar period, and if so, what direction these revisions would take. The study embraced institutions representative of every area and type—east, south, central, and west; large and small; state supported and privately endowed. Every institution questioned is recognized as a leader in its area and type. To forty-seven inquiries, forty-one replies were received. Thirty-nine reported committees at work on fundamental curricular change. Thirty indicated plans sufficiently developed to warrant direct answers. The three most important questions inquired whether the institution had made, would make, or was contemplating, changes at the following points:

Increased emphasis on general education with decreased emphasis on specialization.

Increased number of required courses with decreased emphasis on free electives.

Increased emphasis on enforced distribution during the first two years, with some degree of specialization during the past two years.



## MODERN EDUCATION

Among the thirty institutions which could give definite answers, affirmative replies to these three questions ran from seventy-five to eighty-eight per cent.

Thus is revealed a trend which is nationwide, which characterizes colleges of every size and type, and which is nearly universal. Greatest public interest has been claimed for the projected new curricula at Harvard, Yale, and Princeton. Their plans appear to be farthest advanced; among those thus far announced theirs are the most notable; the prestige of these ancient leaders of the Eastern seaboard justifies special attention to their decisions. But the closely parallel proposals of the "Big Three" are noteworthy less because of the influence they may exert upon others than as symptomatic of a tidal movement which is already in full flow. They reflect the general trend—away from relatively free election toward a fairly large prescription of areas of study if not of specific courses, away from encouragement of specialization toward insistence upon thorough grounding in all the chief fields of human knowledge. This trend is the direct reversal of the drift which has dominated higher education in America for more than half a century.

The major purpose behind all these new schemes is to introduce larger unity, coherence, and therefore meaning, into the undergraduate's course of study. Beneath the proposals lie two assumptions.

The first assumption concerns the *nature of truth*. The Harvard Report on *General Education in a Free Society* voices grave concern over the prevailing chaos in American culture; it points to the "supreme need of

## AND HUMAN VALUES

American education for a unifying purpose and idea"; it proposes to overtake the present lack by introducing each undergraduate to "a common body of information and ideas which would be in some measure the possession of all students." Thus Harvard's motivation is pragmatic, expediential—to further unity in American society by grounding leaders in a common subject matter. Yale and Princeton take higher ground. They face squarely the ultimate issue of the unity of truth, and therefore of the coherence of knowledge which is man's apprehension of truth. The Yale Report affirms that "knowledge for all its convenient compartmentalization is essentially one piece, as is the life which supports knowledge." And the Princeton Plan takes as its guiding principle the "twofold belief in the unity of knowledge and the diversity of human beings."

The second assumption concerns the *nature of man*. It is, quite simply, that the youth of seventeen to twenty years of age is not fully qualified to decide the essentials of his own education. The university must assume responsibility to regulate, in considerable measure, his choices. And in an age lacking coherence and cohesion, under the dominance of specialized interests and fragmentary loyalties, it must require him to master at least the rudiments of each of the great disciplines of learning which together constitute the foundation of an educated mind.

All this is of immense interest to Americans who care deeply for the future leadership of the nation. To those who hold a concern for religion, it is of special importance.

## MODERN EDUCATION

We have said that the assumptions which are guiding change concern the two basic factors in the learning process—the character of truth and the nature of man. Both are fundamentally religious assumptions.

One of these assumptions concerns the *student*. It is a recognition of his limited capacity to determine the nature of a true education and therefore to choose, undirected, his own course of study. Conversely it acknowledges the wisdom of maturity and of tradition.

The other assumption is the *organic unity of truth*, each several part being what it is by virtue of its place within the Whole. But, if truth is an organic whole, how does it come to be so? Whence derives its interrelatedness and coherence? What do these imply regarding the nature of Reality itself? We are driven hard up against the question of God. To be sure, no human mind or all together ever succeed in encompassing that Reality. But conversely, no human mind rightly grasps any fragment of truth without at least some dim awareness of the Whole which gives the fragment existence and meaning. Moreover, if Truth be an organism, then every major subject and every principal subdivision ought to be so presented as to suggest that unity. Any segment of knowledge which is portrayed without recognition of its organic relatedness to all other knowledge is being falsely presented. It is not *Truth* which is being set forth. And that is unsound education.

Let us be quite clear what is at stake here. Not sentimental loyalty to religion. What is at stake is, pure and simple, an issue of TRUTH—of fidelity to the Sovereign which all learning acknowledges as liege

## AND HUMAN VALUES

lord. By the same token, theology, a true knowledge of God, is the Queen of the Sciences—not because the Church says so, or because superstition or tradition have so imposed it upon human credulity, or because it was so recognized in one great age of learning; but because of the nature of Reality, because, if there be a God at all, He must be the ultimate and controlling Reality through which all else derives its being; and the truth concerning Him, as best man can apprehend it, must be the keystone of the ever-incomplete arch of human knowledge. Learning which does not confess Him as its foundation because the Determiner of the conditions which render its enterprise possible, and which does not aspire to Him as its Goal, is false learning, whatever its achievements and its claims.

For many years past, those who have sought to mediate Christian faith to college youth have felt themselves up against almost insuperable obstacles in the very premises of the educational system. In the end of the day, the gravest secularization of American education has not been in the gradual elimination of religious instruction or required chapel, or even in the irreligious outlook of faculties. It has been the secularization of educational theory and structure. Their covert assumptions concerning the two basic factors—Truth and Man—have been nonreligious. And they have been false.

To be sure, even so radical modifications in curricular philosophy will not induce revival in the universities. They concern only one of the three major elements in education—its formal structure. With the

## MODERN EDUCATION

other two—the skill, imagination, and spiritual outlook of the teacher and the capacity, industry, and character of the pupil—present proposals do not attempt to deal. But curriculum is the element most readily subject to control.

We have spoken of these changes as a revolution. They might more properly be described as a conversion—an about-face, and an about-face in the right direction. Someone has suggested that the Harvard Report might be welcomed as an elaborate, costly, and somewhat tardy penance for the curse of the free elective system which Harvard has foisted upon American education for a half century. Few who have studied the trend will question that we stand at the beginning of a new day in American education. Is there room for doubt that it offers the promise of a better day?

### IV

We began with a comment by the late Archbishop of Canterbury on "the most disastrous moment in the history of Europe." Dr. Temple placed his playful jibe at Descartes within the context of an interpretation of the history of human thought. It recognizes a dialectical pattern, with its familiar three phases—thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. The main line of advance is the thesis. From time to time, when movement along that line has become stagnant and sterile, there arises a vigorous movement of antithesis which challenges its complacent traditional assumptions at every point. Ultimately, there succeeds a synthesis of reconciliation in which much of the truth of both thesis and anti-

## AND HUMAN VALUES

thesis is embraced. But—here is the most original and challenging teaching in Temple's exposition—the antithesis is always essentially a negative phase; its invaluable service is to criticize and correct. But it lacks creative and constructive power. The main line of advance is that of the thesis. And, after the salutary catharsis of a period of criticism and correction, advance is resumed by a return to the main line of the thesis, as modified and purified by the power of the antithesis.

The main line of advance in western civilization is that of the Graeco-Roman—Judaistic-Christian tradition whose two source streams sprang from wells deep in the early history of the Greek and Hebrew peoples, were enormously enriched and empowered in Greece's Golden Age and at the birth of Christianity, and merged in the early centuries of the Christian Era. This Hellenistic-Christian tradition flowed steadily down the centuries until it became cluttered with accumulated refuse and congealed in sterile scholasticism in the later Middle Ages. Then came the movement of antithesis, personified by Descartes. Like all antithesis, it was inevitable, and invaluable. But, like all antitheses, it was essentially negative and corrective; it lacked vital powers for origination of thought and cultural advance. That movement has now largely exhausted its vitality, and served its usefulness. The moment when the synthesis is due is approaching. But—if it be a true synthesis, it will not be a mere patching together of elements from thesis and antithesis. Rather, in the perspective of later history, it will be discerned to be a return to the thesis—the main line of advance

## MODERN EDUCATION

in western culture, corrected and purified by the influence of Modern Thought.

Analogies from individual life to social history are always tempting, but of limited validity. But there is an analogy here which is almost irresistible. It is a truism that the normative development of each person passes through three phases. The first, a period marked by indoctrination in the accumulated wisdom of parents and society, carries the child until fourteen or fifteen years of age.

Then follows the brief but turbulent transition of adolescence, characterized by revolt against the "great tradition," and by the discovery of "new" worlds and "new" truth. This may last three or four years, until age nineteen or twenty.

But, if true maturity is achieved, it consists in no small part in return to the well-worn paths and recovery of much which had been wholly discarded in "thoughtless youth."

Substitute roughly a century for each year of individual life, and we have a striking parable of the pilgrimage of western culture in the Christian Era. More particularly, all through these recent centuries—the "modern period"—the life of mankind has exhibited many features strangely familiar in youth's passage through adolescence.

If the analogy holds, another time of transition is upon us. Perhaps two World Wars within a quarter-century sound the warning. The time is ripe for Western Man's "coming of age."

If this interpretation be sound, as I believe in main

## AND HUMAN VALUES

outline it is, we stand at the close of an epoch of criticism and correction essentially negative in character, which began roughly with Descartes and has dominated the past three centuries. But we stand as children of that negative, one-sided, and dying impulse. There can be no sound advance save through those whose whole outlook has been radically and thoroughly remade; that is, those who have been soundly converted to authentic Christian faith. For what is demanded is reconstruction of almost every generally accepted assumption of our day regarding the nature of human life, education, politics, the relation of emotion, reason, and faith, the relation of individual and community, as well as the relation of God to His world and His creatures, and the place of religion within human destiny.

This does not imply an uncritical return to the Middle Ages. It does not demand the reproduction in these modern days of some of the most familiar features of late mediaevalism—feudalism in social organization, or scholasticism in philosophy, though there were structural principles within these outmoded forms of life and thought (the interdependence of all members of a given society, the interrelatedness of all aspects of Truth) which merit serious re-examination. It does not require the rejection and loss of a single sound achievement of recent centuries. What is required is something at once far more fundamental and far more embracing—the recovery of the immanent principles which guided and empowered “the great tradition”: the organic unity of Truth, and therefore of true knowledge; the organic interrelatedness of the individual and society,



## MODERN EDUCATION

of man and nature, of the world and God, of this life and the Life Beyond; the worth of tradition as the bearer of accumulated truth and, therefore, the principal begetter of sound advance; above all—the central and determinative principle of the Hebraic-Hellenic-Christian tradition—the reality and regnancy of the Living God as the prius of both learning and life; therefore, finally, the necessity and the centrality of religion.

We may not see the full realization of the needed synthesis and the resumption of sound advance in our lifetime. It is important that we should grasp its meaning, and be made captive to its service. For that synthesis is the true destiny of education in our day.

# IS THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OBSOLETE?

ROBERT M. HUTCHINS

**T**HE way to discover whether an institution is obsolete is to compare what it can offer with the requirements of the community it serves. If it cannot meet the requirements of the community, it is obsolete, and it will be superseded by a new institution or agency which can offer what the community must have.

You will notice that the obsolescence of an institution does not depend on its failure to supply what the community wants. In fact, some institutions, like the school and the church, may fall into obsolescence because they mistakenly suppose that they must respond to the current desires of the community. Their task is precisely to rise above such desires, to criticize such desires, to give the community what it needs, rather than what it wants. A preoccupation with the evanescent demands of the community is natural on the part of institutions which draw their support from the community. But such obsolescence as we find in the American church and the American educational system must be largely attributed to their misguided efforts to attract support by catering to interests which are irrelevant or hostile to their true purposes. I need only refer to football to make the point about education, and those who were brought up, as I was, in the

## MODERN EDUCATION

heyday of what was called the institutional church may wonder whether the transformation of the church into a community playroom really promoted the moral and spiritual purpose for which the church was founded.

When we ask whether the educational system is obsolete, we are asking what the world requires and what the educational system is doing about it. The answer to the first question may be briefly given. The task of this generation is to establish peace. Peace may no longer be regarded as an interval between wars. Now we must have peace or we shall have no world at all.

The weapons of atomic and bacteriological warfare which are now available make it possible to wipe out civilization overnight. They may soon make it possible to make the globe uninhabitable. The rays from Bikini reached the United States in detectible strength in the space of one week. If it is possible, as it theoretically is, to increase this radioactivity one hundred thousand or a million times, then a couple of bombs off the Pacific Coast could destroy every human being in the United States. A bomb of the kind we have now, planted at the bottom of New York Harbor, could cover the city with lethal spray if it was detonated when the wind was right.

Against this type of warfare there is no defense. Nor is it possible to win this kind of war. In the next war atomic bombs will be used by both sides, and the cities of both sides will be destroyed. We cannot rely upon a secret to defend us against the bomb. The only secret worth keeping came out when the bomb went off. Agreements for the international control of atomic

## AND HUMAN VALUES

energy, which are absolutely imperative, will be of no avail. If such agreements are effective, they will merely guarantee that the next war will end with atomic bombs instead of beginning with them. If these agreements are ineffective, they will simply increase the value of the element of surprise which the atomic bomb has added to the arsenal of the aggressor.

Since there is no defense against the atomic bomb, vast military preparations are useless to the United States. While we have a monopoly of the bomb, we do not need these preparations. When other nations have the bomb, these preparations will do us no good. These preparations, are, in fact, a danger to us, for they serve to convince other nations that we are out to dominate the world. It is true that in comparison with the record of other countries ours is not bad. We have never had to confront a major power in the course of our imperialism. We took most of what we wanted from the Indians. But our record is not so good as to justify us in supposing that other nations will think we are so much better than they that we, and not they, should be trusted with overwhelming force.

If the task is to establish peace, how do we do it? The aim is certainly world government and world law. Now it is one world or none at all. In regard to world government two observations may be made. The first is that nobody yet knows what it is. Those who oppose it and those who favor it do so without any clear idea of the real possibilities and the real difficulties. This is illustrated by the fact that opposition comes from the large nations on the ground that their power will

## MODERN EDUCATION

be diminished and from the small nations on the ground that their rights will be infringed. What is needed is a serious attempt to draft a constitution now, not for adoption, but for criticism and discussion. We might at least find out what we are talking about.

In the second place, we know that no world government can endure—perhaps it cannot even arise—unless it is supported by a world community. The prospects of a world civil war are not attractive. A world community depends on world communication. This means more than radio, telegraphs, air mail, and motion pictures. It means understanding, and this rests on a common stock of ideas and ideals. It requires recognition of the common humanity of every man and nation.

This may be, in the present state of mankind, an impossible achievement, but if it is, there is no hope for us. The anarchy produced by the competition of sovereign states means war, and war means the end of civilization. Last October Mr. Molotov said that in the peaceful competition of states and social systems lies the only hope for the world. This is certainly better, if it may be taken at its face value, than the stirring calls issued by our statesmen for the largest army, navy, and air force in the world. But Mr. Molotov overlooks or suppresses the fact that between states and social systems there cannot in the long run be peaceful competition unless violence is controlled by law. The history of our own country from the Whiskey Rebellion to Huey Long and from the Gold Rush to the Chicago newspaper wars shows that competition between states, as between individuals, can operate peacefully only

## AND HUMAN VALUES

with some difficulty, and then only within a framework of law. The United Nations, which rests on the principle of the sovereignty of states, cannot be regarded in its present form as anything more than a highly tentative first step toward world law.

We see, then, that if we are to survive, we must establish peace in our generation and that this can be accomplished only by a world government, which must be supported by a world community. Peace is necessary to survival. But survival is not the aim of human life. A sea captain who merely kept his ship afloat would not deserve the name. The captain must take the ship to its destination. Granting that an important question is can we survive? a still more important one is what are we going to do with ourselves if we do?

The prospects of a satisfactory answer to this question are not encouraging. As we now save children from infants' diseases in order to put them into insane asylums when they grow up, so we have cut working hours from sixty to forty and produced the comic book as the symbol of our cultural epoch. This process of reducing working hours has been going on for a generation. I am for it, just as I am for literacy. But it must be admitted that the value of leisure, like the value of literacy, depends on what you do with it. A literacy which means that millions who might otherwise have lived in innocence now feed themselves on the yellow press is of doubtful utility to civilization. A leisure which is spent in more and more futile ways of trying to get other people to amuse us cannot lead us, as Aristotle hoped, to a higher intellectual plane. By the

## MODERN EDUCATION

combination of high literacy and great leisure we have got the comic book.

This is bad enough, in all conscience, but if we survive, it will be worse. The use of atomic energy for heat, power, and light, is just around the corner. In 1930 Mr. Hoover said that prosperity was just around the corner, and it arrived in 1939. I am using the phrase in the Hooverian sense. There are no scientific or engineering difficulties of any consequence in the way of the commercial exploitation of atomic energy. The cost of transporting the materials from which atomic energy is made is negligible. This means that it will be possible to establish new industries and new communities anywhere in the world. It means that in so far as the location of Pittsburgh has depended on its proximity to sources of power, there will, to that extent, be no further reason for its existence. If, because of the location of raw materials, it would be more economical to locate industries on the polar ice cap or in the heart of the Congo, then they will be located there. And communities, which could be free from smoke, could be located wherever the climate was most agreeable.

The creation of new industries and new communities will be accompanied, as I have hinted, by the disintegration of old industries and old communities. This means growing insecurity. The problems of citizenship, which we have been able to take very lightly, will seem too much for us. We shall turn to the government to save us. Only the government will seem large enough to cope with a crisis of such dimensions. Nobody suggested that atomic energy should not be a

## AND HUMAN VALUES

government monopoly. The only question was which branch of the government should monopolize it. As the crisis grows, we may even hear that we need a leader with a capital L. The strain on the government will be enormous. Its principal problems will be security and boredom. And so the world comes back again to bread and circuses.

We are in the position of the little boy who asked Santa Claus for a volcano and got it. If the volcano erupts, we shall be destroyed. If it does not, we shall live in constant anxiety. If we can harness the volcano to serve mankind, we shall find that mankind is unprepared to benefit from its services. In any case, from anything that we can now see, the result is chaos.

From dangers so serious and so immediate it would be too much to expect education to save us. And in this country education has mirrored the chaos of the modern world. The record of American education for leadership is not impressive. It has tended to be the slave of society rather than its guide. Popular education, democratically conceived, is a means of continuing or accentuating accepted values, not a means by which society can hope to lift itself by its own bootstraps into a different spiritual world.

Yet we must now lift ourselves by our own bootstraps into a different spiritual world. Nobody else is going to do it for us. And admitting that education cannot do the whole job, we may ask ourselves whether there is any part of the job which any part of the educational system can undertake. If we decide that the educational system cannot do any part of the job, then indeed



## MODERN EDUCATION

we must conclude that the system itself is obsolete.

What has the educational system been doing? What can it do? As to the universities, we know one thing with certainty about them; they can produce weapons of war. If at any time you want to start a war, I am sure that the American scientists can supply you with bigger and better instruments of destruction, capable of blowing up more people at one time than have ever been blown up before. Yet, if our task is to establish peace, the production of weapons seems oddly unrelated to our task.

The American universities were able to produce sensational new weapons in a sensationally short time because of certain characteristics of the higher learning in America. These were a devotion to science, a devotion to technology, and a devotion to specialization.

In my admiration for science and technology I yield to no one. The record of my university in the past eighteen years shows that I mean it when I say that I believe science is an indispensable part of education and scientific research an indispensable activity for a university. The more science and technology there are, the better I shall like it. I will not join any movement to retard natural science and technology on the ground that we must allow the social sciences and the humanities to catch up with our scientific knowledge.

Scientific education and scientific research are imperative, because we must understand the world in which we live. But it is important to notice that science tells us nothing about what to do with the world when we have understood it. It can show us how to blow up

## AND HUMAN VALUES

the world or how to reconstruct it, how to end or how to prolong human life, how to get more leisure, and how to acquire more gadgets. But whether to blow up the world or reconstruct it, whether to prolong human life or end it, and what to do with our leisure and gadgets—on these matters science has not a word to say.

Science gives us control over nature. It affects the material conditions of existence. It does not, and I believe it cannot, give us control over ourselves. It does not, and I believe it cannot, affect the moral conditions of existence. As we do not need new weapons of war, so we do not imperatively require greater control over nature. Though we should welcome every improvement in the material conditions of existence, we do not need additional scientific knowledge in order to improve them: what we need now, even on the material level, is the will to use what we know and what we have for the benefit of suffering humanity everywhere. We could feed Germany if we wanted to. Whether we do feed Germany is a moral and not a material problem. Science is important, but not most important today.

In general we may say the same of research in all fields of knowledge. It is hard for me to say it; for research is the distinguishing characteristic of universities, and especially of my own. Yet, if we are asking what the world requires, we must admit that it requires education as it ought to be rather than research as it is commonly understood. Research as it is commonly understood involves inquiry, the development of information, and their organization into new knowledge. This is important; for the long pull it is most impor-

## MODERN EDUCATION

tant—but it is far less important than education today.

I wish to make it clear that I am talking about research as it is commonly understood. To the extent to which research can mean the development of synthesis, thought about the interrelations of things, the production of valid generalizations, and the formulation of directives for mankind, to that extent research is even more important than education; for such research will supply the ideas which education must have.

But this is not research as it is commonly understood. In fact, it probably would not be called research at all. It would be called philosophizing, and in no complimentary tone. The term research is usually reserved for that process which is the very reverse of synthesizing—the process of breaking down our knowledge of the world and man into smaller and smaller fractions so that new fractions may be comprehended. This is an indispensable process—particularly in the sciences it has yielded marvelous results. We cannot say that it is what the world needs most today, any more than we can say that what the world needs most today is marvelous scientific results.

It is customary to say that we need more research in the humanities and the social sciences to enable us to balance and absorb the scientific achievements of the past fifty years. I do not believe it. Granting that every bit of social, economic, political, and historical information we can acquire should be acquired on the ground that any bit may be useful to us in understanding ourselves and our society, I cannot see that our present plight results at all from lack of such informa-

## AND HUMAN VALUES

tion or that such information has the slightest chance of curing it. We know, for example, that we cannot export unless we import, or unless we are prepared to bury more gold at Fort Knox. We do not need additional economic or political data to help us solve the tariff problem. The question is, what kind of world do we want, and what kind of sacrifices are we willing to make to get it. We do not need to investigate to answer this question. We need to get straight about ourselves and our relations with our fellow men. I venture to say that every great, urgent problem of our generation falls in the same category, from world government to the freedom of the press, from the unity of Germany to the separation of Palestine—on none of these problems is research necessary; none of these problems will be solved by research. I repeat: we do not need more knowledge; we need the character and the intelligence to use rightly the knowledge we have.

Research as it is commonly understood is hostile to education. By education I mean true education and not training to be a research man. Education must be synthesizing and generalizing. It must provide understanding and comprehension. I do not say that this is what the educational system does. I say that it is what true education does. If the educational system does not do this, it may be a housing project or a training program, but it is not an educational system. The analytical processes of research as it is commonly understood are admirable and admirably adapted to the purposes of research. They are not adapted to the purposes of education.

## MODERN EDUCATION

They are therefore not adapted to the education of teachers. A teacher needs to be educated, not trained. And his education should be continued through the Ph.D. degree, and indeed throughout his life. The teachers in our colleges and universities are trained for research; they are not educated. The worst of this is not that seventy-five per cent of them do no research after they obtain the degree, though that is bad enough. The worst of it is that they are unfitted for teaching. There are one or two colleges in the United States which are successfully seeking to give a liberal education. Only the most rugged graduates of such institutions could resist the corruption of the graduate schools and emerge qualified to participate in a program of liberal education. As for the graduates of other colleges, they can only by accident acquire the education which a teacher should have.

What teachers need, and what the world needs, is a liberal education. Liberal education is, first of all, education appropriate to man. I shall not tell you what man is in the language of Plato, Aristotle, Aquinas, or any of the other back numbers who have been discredited by the advance of modern science. Let us listen instead to the words of one who is himself a distinguished scientist, Julian Huxley. In his book on evolution he asserts that speech and conceptual thought form the basis of man's biological dominance, that speech and conceptual thought are found only in man, that man's increasing control over nature has been the result of his capacity for tradition, which is unique in him, that his gains in the future must be sought in the

## AND HUMAN VALUES

fundamental basis of human dominance, the feeling, thinking brain. "The evolutionary biologist," Huxley says, "is tempted to ask whether the aim should not be to let the mammal die within us, so as the more effectually to permit the man to live. . . . True human progress consists in increase of aesthetic, intellectual, and spiritual experience and satisfaction." Huxley concludes: "The future of man, if it is to be progress and not merely a standstill or a degeneration, must be guided by deliberate purpose. And this human purpose can be only formulated in terms of the new attributes achieved by life in becoming human."

An education appropriate to man, then, will be one formulated in terms of the new attributes achieved by life in becoming human. An education which is liberal should free man from the mammal within.

Bishop Berkeley put it another way, drawing his metaphor from a slightly lower social stratum of the animal kingdom. He attacked an education designed for thriving earthworms. An earthworm who wanted to thrive would seek health, wealth, and recreation. An education appropriate to man should have somewhat higher aims.

Upon the development of men's human powers must rest the hope for the development of the human community. There can be no community between earthworms and men. And a community is something more than a group of mammals wrestling with one another in the same geographical region. Nor can a community result from the improvement of transportation. A community depends not on transportation, but on com-

## MODERN EDUCATION

munication. Communication requires a stock of common ideas and ideals, for it is impossible without mutual intelligibility.

Both individual freedom and the free community, then, depend on the development of the highest powers of men, the characteristic powers of the human animal. In this sense, liberal education must be intellectual education. This is so because it aims to make men human. It is an education appropriate to man.

A second requirement of liberal education is that it hold before the rising generation what Whitehead has called the habitual vision of greatness. The noblest achievements of mankind, the highest aspirations of the human spirit—these are the essence of an education designed to suppress the mammal (or the earthworm) within us and make us truly human. The habitual vision of greatness supplies us with the direction and motive power we need.

Where do we find that vision in American education today? The pupils of Socrates found it by looking at him. But no system of education for the millions can hope for a Socrates in every classroom.

If the teacher cannot be expected to be a model of greatness, we must look for it in the student's daily fare. We must find it in the books he reads.

The position of great books and textbooks is now the reverse of what it ought to be. The books which no man can be educated without reading are on those well-known collateral lists which are printed in every syllabus and never heard of again. The teacher does not refer to them. The student is not examined on

## AND HUMAN VALUES

them. The student is no fool. His slogan is embodied in the immortal saying of a lady of genius, "I love to loaf, but I will not waste my time." He knows that the course is built around the textbook and reads enough of the textbook to pass the course. But offhand it would seem that if one book is to be central and another collateral, the great one should be central, and the patient, pedestrian, explanatory, undistinguished one should be collateral. Unless great books become central, the vision of greatness cannot be habitual in education. And no education in which it is not habitual can be liberal education.

A third requirement of liberal education is that it must deal with permanent and not shifting conditions, with ultimate and not relative ends. Two years ago a committee appointed by the British Board of Education reported its recommendations for the future of the British secondary schools. The committee, which was under the chairmanship of Sir Cyril Norwood, placed these words at the beginning of its report: "We believe that education cannot stop short of recognizing the ideals of truth and beauty and goodness as final and binding for all times and in all places, as ultimate values. Our belief is that education from its own nature must be ultimately concerned with values which are independent of time or particular environment, though realizable under changing forms in both, and therefore that no programs of education which concern themselves only with relative ends and the immediate adaptation of the individual to existing surroundings can be acceptable."



## MODERN EDUCATION

This proposition must have a strangely antiquated ring to American ears. The current aim of American education is to adjust the young to their environment, to reduce the shock of novelty that comes with the first job, the first vote, and the first marriage. This program has probably done more than anything else to promote the disintegration of American education.

Where can you stop if you set out to adjust the young to their environment? The environment presses upon them from every point of the compass, presenting them with problems of conduct most complicated and detailed. The selection of clothing—the methods of paying for it; the selection of a home and the methods of finding it; the selection of a wife, and whether she shall be blond or brunette, ignorant or intelligent, healthy or interesting; the right number of children, and how to have them and not to have them; the difference between tax evasion and tax avoidance; the relative advantages of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, the *Reader's Digest*, the *Ladies' Home Journal*, the *Motion Picture Classic*, and the *Atlantic Monthly*; whether to go to the theater or the movies, and how many times a week; how much to contribute to the Community Fund; whether to play golf or tennis, and the effect of each upon the heart—these questions, together with the questions whether to be for or against the closed shop, the sales tax, Mr. Truman, and prohibition—all these questions bear acutely on the young. American educators have responded to the call. You think I have made up these questions. Not at all. College courses purporting specifically to answer these questions are

## AND HUMAN VALUES

offered in many colleges and universities of the Nation.

Yet to answer them educators would have to have the gift of prophecy in a degree in which mankind has not been favored with it for at least two thousand years. Though educators who purport to answer these questions hold that everything is changing, so that there can be no permanent values and no permanent studies, though they believe that we can learn nothing from antiquity, or the middle ages, or the day before yesterday, because it was only yesterday that slavery was abolished and the automobile, aeroplane, and radio invented, they insist that today tells us all about the day after tomorrow, when today will be the day before yesterday. The one thing we know is that the world and its current problems will have changed by the time our students face them.

They must be prepared to face them. The question is how can they be prepared.

If relative ends and immediate adaptation to existing surroundings are a waste of time, it may be that the Norwood Committee is right in suggesting values independent of time or particular environment, though realizable under changing forms in both. What we need to make the shifting environment intelligible is ideas, standards, and principles: ideas, the instruments of knowledge; standards, to judge objectively the problems that present themselves; and principles of conduct which transcend the particular problems of the day.

Our graduates must have above all the capacity to face new situations. This means that they must know how to think. If we can help them learn how to think,

## MODERN EDUCATION

then we have done the most that we can do for them.

Liberal education, then, is education appropriate to man. It is education which holds before the rising generation the habitual vision of greatness. It is education concerned not with relative ends and immediate adaptation of the individual to existing surroundings, but with values independent of time or particular environment, though realizable under changing forms in both.

The specialism and departmentalization of universities, which are appropriate to research institutes, have penetrated the colleges, where they tend to defeat the educational purposes of the colleges. Nothing I have said about liberal education suggests that there is any place for specialism or departmentalization in it. These are disintegrating forces, as an inspection of any American university will show. The task of liberal education is integration.

From the standpoint of the educational system its object is to adjust the young to their environment. From the standpoint of the student its object is to give him social standing and vocational success. It is obvious that such a conception of the aim of education can lead only to disappointment. When everybody goes to school, going to school cannot distinguish those who go. When everybody is somebody, as Gilbert and Sullivan pointed out, nobody's anybody. Nor can education make any direct contribution to vocational success. Nothing is as obsolete as yesterday's methods and machinery for vocational training, except possibly yesterday's vocational training teachers. The advance of technology is so rapid that training on yesterday's ma-

## AND HUMAN VALUES

chines by yesterday's teachers is likely to prove a positive handicap to the student when he faces tomorrow's machines. Moreover, as the experience of wartime showed, industry can train its hands in a very short time if it wants to, and it can train them on the machines that it is actually using. The object of industrial management for the past fifty years has been to reduce its operations to such simplicity that they can be conducted by twelve-year-old children. To devote the precious time of the educational system to learning such techniques when the great problems of citizenship hang over us is a criminal waste. It is inefficient, unproductive, and harmful; for it presents the educational system in the discreditable light of a patent medicine vendor who is selling a little colored water as a remedy for all the ills of man and beast.

Nor are the misdeeds of the educational system confined to their dealings with the young. For years adult education has been regarded as a method of turning third-rate bookkeepers into second-rate bookkeepers, with the further advantage that it has enabled universities to pay their professors some slight additional compensation for doing bad teaching when they are exhausted in the evening hours. As for the adult public itself, it has regarded these or any other educational opportunities with complete indifference. The theory has been that education was for children, like the mumps, measles, or whooping cough. And like these diseases, when you have had education once, you need not, indeed you cannot, have it again. Yet it is clear that if other countries possess the atomic bomb in

## MODERN EDUCATION

five years, the position of the United States will be drastically altered in five years. We cannot wait for the rising generation to rise. We must educate our adult population now for the responsibilities which they must now bear.

The education they must now have is the education they should have had, and that is liberal education. The task of liberal education is a lifelong task. If the obligation of our generation is to establish peace, an essential requirement of its performance is the liberal education of adults on a scale undreamed of hitherto.

It may be said that the task of establishing peace cannot be accomplished by liberal education, even of all the people in one country. You may argue that if our hearts are changed, and those of the Russians are unchanged, we shall merely have the satisfaction of being blown up with changed hearts rather than with unchanged ones. I do not expect an American audience to have enough faith in the immortality of the soul to regard this as more than a dubious consolation. Yet it may be that here the power of example is still valid. It may be that if we demonstrated our reliance, not on our wealth and power, but on our character, intelligence, and good will; if we showed that we wanted peace and knew how to get it, the news might penetrate the iron curtain and evoke some response even behind it. At any rate we can be certain that we are going to be blown up anyway, and that the only hope we have is in the direction which I have attempted to indicate.

I have been suggesting that American education is obsolete because it is not meeting the requirements

## AND HUMAN VALUES

of the community it serves. That community has been suddenly catapulted into an entirely new world, beset by dangers the like of which no community has ever experienced before. The ideals and standards of American education may have been adequate to an earlier day, but I doubt it. The reason why American education has not ruined the country is that it has been irrelevant. The country was so rich and strong that nothing could ruin it. I have heard that education is the American substitute for a national religion. I do not believe it. As a whole the American people are indifferent to education, as the present level of teachers' salaries suffices to show. I do not blame them for their indifference, for up to now they could regard education as a way of keeping the young off the streets and the labor market and a fine talking point on behalf of the American Way. Now the world has changed, and American education and the American attitude toward education must change with it.

The job before American education is enormous, so much so that it looks hopeless. But it is not as hopeless as it looks. In the first place, we do not know what education can accomplish, because we have never tried it. In order to try it we should abandon at once the bogus pretensions of vocational training and the frivolities of the so-called colleges of liberal arts. And for these false aims we should substitute the goal of the liberal education of the entire population. This will require the elimination of specialization and departmentalization in the colleges, a new approach to the education of teachers, and a reorganization of the graduate schools.

## MODERN EDUCATION

At the adult level we have new instruments at our disposal which make it impossible for us to claim that we cannot reach the millions whom we must now reach. Horace Mann founded the American common school in Massachusetts only one hundred years ago. This was an educational revolution. But Horace Mann must have had more difficulty in getting in touch with Pittsfield from Boston than he would have today in communicating with Los Angeles, London, Calcutta, or even Moscow. The radio, the motion picture, and the distribution of cheap printed material by aeroplane give education an entirely new opportunity and one which they have almost totally failed to exploit.

But in communication the principal question is what is to be communicated. The use of the new devices which technology has given us for the communication of hatred, propaganda, and invective would not be likely to promote that world community toward which we must aspire. I should like to endorse tentatively the suggestion of the delegate from Lebanon to the United Nations. He said that the common bond which could unite all men, which could show all men their common humanity, and which could reveal to them the common tradition in which, whether they know it or not, they all live was the great works of the human mind and spirit. He expressed the conviction that if all mankind could join in the study of these great works a world community might arise.

At the present time 65 hundred people are studying the great works of the human mind and spirit in classes initiated by the University of Chicago. Next year there

## AND HUMAN VALUES

will be 50 thousand. Within five years I confidently expect to see 15 million Americans engaged in this study. The Encyclopaedia Britannica, which is affiliated with the University, proposes the national and international distribution of the books. Free from specialization, class credits, degrees, and the other paraphernalia and impedimenta of formal education, the adults in these groups may acquire an education.

I do not say that this is the only way in which an education can be acquired. I say that it is promising. It has seemed to me one method by which our people might obtain an education appropriate to man. If anybody has any better idea, I shall gladly embrace him and it.

It is very late. The only defense against the atomic bomb is to learn how to behave ourselves; and we have been misbehaving ourselves for several thousand years. The only way to save ourselves, if we survive in the atomic age, from the suicidal tendencies which boredom eventually induces is to have high moral purpose and serious intellectual interests. An educational system which does not meet these requirements is obsolete. I trust that the American educational system can muster in time the courage and ability to bring about its own rejuvenation.



# EDUCATION FOR SELF AND SOCIETY

ORDWAY TEAD

**I** WISH there were some way to assume that as we talk about education we are not discussing something held separate and distinct from life as it pulsates about us and in us. Even more desirable is it for us to hope that to discuss is to follow through and affect action in this troubled area of human effort.

Perhaps the gravest danger of educational discourse is that it tends to have its own isolationism. Somehow, the dusty smell of chalk and the scraping of tablet chairs on the floor connote to too many a shocking sense of remoteness. Somehow, the tradition, the vocabulary, the structural and geographic separateness of education, all contribute to a bifurcation of the means as standing too remote from the throb of vital, youthful learning experience which is the end.

Of course, education is not completely one with the workaday world. Nor should it be. Yet we have somehow to see, to feel, and to achieve for it a reality with more immediacy to living—a state more responsive and shot through with life's urgency than is now the case for teacher and student.

Also, it is impossible to keep the vitality and dynamism of life out of the classroom. In some measure,

## AND HUMAN VALUES

youth will be served by the sheer gusto of a congregating of energetic and curious youngsters. But there are too many occasions when this process goes on in spite of the teachers' effective leadership, rather than because of it.

My intention in this lecture is to range widely in order to see relationships among the parts of our problem of educating for self and for society. I shall characterize (1) the social setting in which we here labor; (2) the challenge to education which that setting reveals; (3) the philosophy with which we may approach our task; (4) a view of the functional services we should ask education to perform; (5) the task faced by the teacher in animating the entire process; and finally (6) the administrative responsibilities in the process.

I shall deliberately present these several topics as they affect in similar ways teachers at all the age levels of instruction, in the belief that underlying all education are certain common approaches and preconceptions which all teachers do well to hold in view.

But a few further introductory observations are first in order. We will have a rightful and necessary perspective if throughout we hold in view certain truths in the light of which our work goes on.

Education is America's great experiment and great hope. In an almost pathetic way we tend to hold that the way of universal education is *the* way of democratic salvation. To the perennial question "What shall we do to be saved?" our most confident and unanimous answer as Americans is, "Educate our people." Yet, when in self-appraising moments we ask *what* edu-

## MODERN EDUCATION

cation we should give, and how and when and why, we are less confident and less unanimous. Indeed, as I shall presently emphasize, our moods of self-distrust and disappointment can be profound; and we seem—for good reasons—to be plunged into such a mood today.

Again, educators no less than parents, need to be reminded that for better or for worse children are being educated *all the time* by *all* the influences which play upon their lives. If we compare the few hours of formal schooling with the larger number of hours when children are exposed to movies, radio, advertising, the comics, the tabloid journals and magazines—to mention only a few—we realize that either we hold too cheaply the formal effort or we are ignoring at real hazard the moral anarchy and destructiveness of some of these other formative influences. Surely, a not fully acknowledged problem for educators is the quality and the control of these informal but powerful forces. Is formal education to be an excrescence or is it to be intrinsic with the years and all the processes of growth?

Another factor not to be slighted is the tendency to a lag between our knowledge of good education and our practice of it. We do not educate as well as we at our professional best know how to. And the reasons are all too clear. School boards, school administrators, the older teachers, and parents, themselves—all are products of pedagogical theories and practices of twenty to forty years ago. True, there are for the professionals the refresher courses and the summer session institutes; and much good they do. But how often one hears among nonprofessionals discussions of educational methods

## AND HUMAN VALUES

which start off with the presumably weighty premise, "Now when I went to school . . ."

A different way of conveying the same warning is to say that our formal education is a reasonably accurate reflection of the outlooks, the standards, the dominant sentiments prevailing in the adult community at a given time or place. I do not say that this is wrong; but it does present difficulties for those who are looking forward. Nor do I imply that progress is impossible; but I do suggest that basic improvement in the total educational scene requires a kind of subtle and continuing guidance of public opinion by educators to inform the community about needed and tested steps ahead which should be taken.

In short, our approach cannot be wholly traditional and in terms of methods which were acceptable a generation ago. Our challenge is more profound. We have more searching questions to put and to answer if the hope of salvation is to have a remote chance of being realized. Nothing less must be examined than the question: With what do we want the adults of tomorrow equipped—to be, to know, and to do? And after we are more clear about that, we must ask: How shall we equip them?

To answer such basic questions as these we have, first, to know the characteristics of the society in which we live. We cannot hold the view advanced by some that fundamentally education should always be the same, irrespective of time or place. Rather as Whitehead has said, "Education is guidance of the individual toward a comprehension of the art of life." And the art

## MODERN EDUCATION

of life has for today its own demanding artistry as we face *today's* complexities.

Or with the late President John H. Finley of the College of The City of New York we affirm that "education is the process by which the individual relates himself to this universe, gives himself a citizenship in the world, shares the race's mind, and enriches his own soul." For this enterprise, surely the "universe," "citizenship," and the "soul" are seen today in new and more complex meanings than ever before.

For ease of remembering, I have chosen certain words to remind us of a social condition which adds up to an educational challenge of some magnitude. The words are information, organization, secularization, centralization, urbanization, standardization, communication, mechanization, acceleration, over-stimulation, personal frustration, and family disintegration.

Each of these words calls attention to a facet of truth about contemporary living, as I should like to suggest.

By *information* I refer to the staggering range of possible factual knowledge today spread before us. We tend to be surfeited with sheer facts, to spend too much time acquiring them, to set too great store by them, to have no basis for selection among them, to hold that knowledge for its own sake has a certain virtue. The radio "quiz programs" are but a popular symptom of an affliction which has unfortunate influences upon much of our educational planning and content.

By *organization* I refer to the fact that many of us live all day long as participating members of some organized group where we are functioning in close per-

## AND HUMAN VALUES

sonal and almost physical contact with other humans. We are managers or managed, officers or members, leaders or followers, supervisors or supervised, in vast organizational networks for all sorts of purposes. And the demands which this juxtaposition puts upon us in terms of human relations are taxing and highly artificial for the human organism.

By *secularization* I am alluding to that profound influence abroad in our times which says in effect that nothing is sacred or worthy of reverence or worship, that this is only man's world and in no sense God's world, that there is little to choose as between material values and spiritual values, and that matters of character and morality are private and personal concerns not to be interfered with by organized society.

By *centralization* I suggest the trend of populations, organizations, and governments to come together into larger and larger aggregates, with controls increasingly consolidated at the top.

*Urbanization* is the specific manifestation of this in the progressive shift of people into concentrated urban areas. We are increasingly a nation of city and suburban inhabitants with the stresses and strains which that kind of living implies.

*Standardization* is here used to suggest that uniformity of taste and expression which covers our land with identical movies, radio broadcasts, syndicated newspaper material, national advertising, trademarked products—all tending to minimize the individuality of different regions and to put a blight of mediocre sameness upon recreation, consumption habits, architec-

## MODERN EDUCATION

ture, cultural life, and mental outlooks generally.

*Communication* is faster, more multiform, and probably more centrally controlled than ever before. The varied avenues of public communication within the nation and among nations are important to understand, and it is essential that they be kept free. We are here dealing with a force of tremendous actual and potential power.

The development of communication is but one of many evidences of *mechanization*. The products of technology multiply for our use. Old industries fall and new ones rise. It takes progressively more machines and power, and less manual labor, to create the goods we use. And this process of industrial development and shifting geographic plant locations goes on more rapidly than ever—one striking evidence of *acceleration* in the tempo of our time. Life becomes more speeded up and more crowded as all kinds of transportation employ greater horsepower; and speed is worshipped for its own sake.

This, in turn, gives rise to *over-stimulation*, which occurs in every phase of our life, whipping us all up into more hurried, more nervous, more exasperated, and often more frustrated expression of our interests and desires. On all sides and for all kinds of reasons our appetites are appealed to; and if we cannot pay the price of satisfying them, that is just too bad. But the consequence in terms of the loss of stability and mental integrity of individuals spells *frustration* which takes its toll, as ominously reflected in the mounting figures of delinquency, divorce, mental illness, and crime.

## AND HUMAN VALUES

And, finally, the helpful forces of strong family and neighborhood roots and ties upon which we formerly relied for support, are giving way to clear evidences of *family disintegration*, especially in urban areas. For home and neighborhood ties clearly do not supply today the moral underpinning which was true even a generation ago.

Let me, on this score, try to clinch this picture by a brief comparison with the situation in a New England township of a century ago. For by that contrasting picture we see most clearly what have been the losses and what the gains in the educational task now presented. Typically, in a New England town, the church, the school, the town hall, and the general store stood hard by each other on the same public common, and their functions and responsibilities were organically interrelated and reasonably obvious for young and old to know by firsthand experience. A homogeneous population of families, nearly all engaged in agricultural pursuits, and all personally known to each other, lived on farms with a high degree of self-sufficiency, where large families were an economic asset. Read Whittier's "Snowbound" for a picture of the schoolmaster and the school task of those days.



# MODERN EDUCATION

## II

The transition from all this to the present has truly caught us educationally not fully aware of the revolutionary differences with which we have to cope. For a compact but, I believe, essentially accurate characterization of the present *malaise*, I am drawing upon a sharply etched paragraph by Walter Lippmann. He has said:

There is no common faith, no common body of principle, no common body of knowledge, no common moral and intellectual discipline. Yet the graduates of these modern schools are expected to form a civilized community. They are expected to govern themselves. They are expected to have a social conscience. They are expected to arrive by discussion at common purposes. When one realizes that they have no common culture is it astounding that they have no common purpose? That they worship false gods? That only in war do they unite? That in the fierce struggle for existence they are tearing western society to pieces? They are the graduates of an educational system in which, though attendance is compulsory, the choice of the subject matter of education is left to the imagination of college presidents, trustees, and professors, or even to the whims of the pupils themselves. We have established a system of education in which we insist that while everyone must be educated, yet there is nothing in particular that an educated man must know.<sup>1</sup>

Here is a scathing indictment which we can well afford to examine with some care. Lippmann alleges

<sup>1</sup>An address delivered December 29, 1940, before the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

## AND HUMAN VALUES

that we possess no common principles, no agreed body of desirable knowledge, no shared body of aims and social purposes, no cultural unity. Even though you may claim that these allegations are overdrawn, there is enough of truth here to supply a text for a good deal of my discussion.

Lippmann has this great value for us. He centers attention at the point where the attention of the friends of education should first be focused. He urges us to re-examine first principles—in other words, our philosophy. And he means, I am sure, our philosophy of life, as offering necessary guidance for our philosophy of education. For until we establish the one we cannot advance far with the other.

James Truslow Adams propounds the same theme when he says:

Unless we can agree as to what the values of life are, we clearly can have no goal in education, and if we have no goal, the discussion of methods is futile.

Central here is the thesis offered, in other words, by the educator who said, "Today the main task of education and religion alike is to restore men and women to the unity of their powers."

What are the values of life and how is the unity of our powers to be achieved?

I realize as I approach this whole area that I am open to the criticism that "one man's metaphysics is another man's verbiage." Yet I must offer some observations about first principles and values and about the possible unifying of our powers as fundamental to our educational programs.

## MODERN EDUCATION

This frame of reference might be advanced in terms of a number of current intellectual influences. I might, for example, advance the retrospective position which has come to be called Neo-Thomism, and which is associated with the names of certain scholars at the University of Chicago, St. John's College, and with some influential Catholic educators. I realize that it has the virtue of its very definiteness, its logical structure, and the secure and absolute finality which is its special boon. But I find myself disturbed by its very assured certainty. It seems to say that the past had all the answers, that new disclosures of truth are not only not possible but not necessary, that the retrospective look is the solely revealing look. Hence, I for one cannot espouse this approach to first principles, attractive though in many ways it would seem to some to be.

Again, I might conceivably, if not too logically, propose the claims of the social determinists—of Marx in the world of economic causation, of Darwin in the world of philogenic evolution, of Freud in the hidden world of the unconscious. Surely we would be infinitely the poorer without these several insights; but surely, too, they are each partial and fragmentary, taking some one facet for the whole.

A philosophy of the glorified state is not unfamiliar; and even such a scholar as Alexander Meiklejohn in his *Education Between Two Worlds* is dangerously close to a position that elevates the state too high above the person. And in its more familiar forms we are rightly frightened by the examples of statism which Europe has recently supplied.

## AND HUMAN VALUES

Let me make clear that it seems to me that we today seek answers to such questions as:

"Does man participate in some building and some growth which is counting toward something?"

"Are there experiences and truths valued by him which have permanence and validity as they become realized?"

"Is his struggle to realize these values supported in some manner? As man strives to *become* may he have faith that he gets close to *being*?"

"As he searches to know the nature of his self and of his society or community is he historically by way of achieving disclosures of insight which help toward a finer mastery and a 'uller and happier destiny?"

I am contending that the consensus from the experience of the race, and especially from its greatest prophets, seers, saviors, martyrs, philosophers, artists, and scientists, confirms the Everlasting Yea. All these confirm and help to justify a belief—rational, intuitive and experiential—that man is not a complete stranger in this world, but is set here to do a *will* which he is obligated and summoned to discover and to realize.

Moreover, the means to that discovery are sufficiently at his disposal for him to know more and more of the direction in which his duty and responsibility lie. Those means to the disclosure of a way of salvation derive from his experience—with his mind, his affections, his visions, his mystical elevations, his worship, his yearning for community with his fellow men, his experiments with free and shared government.

In the systematic search for understanding—of things

## MODERN EDUCATION

material, personal, and social—much has already been learned; and presumably we are but at a beginning. The great areas of discovery here are the following: In the historic expressions of the fresh insights of artists in all the great fields of human endeavor, we lift the hem of the garment of an ineffable beauty and of a deep comfort to the human spirit. In the direct disclosures of the unutterable to the saints many have found persuasion and sustenance. In the moral claims and ethical formulations of the greatest religious leaders, their upreaching spirit beareth witness with our spirits. In the faith and works of democratic political pioneers we have found arrangements for co-operative living which can make free men more productive and happy together.

Certainly on behalf of the human career on this earth we have found rational and nonrational avenues to reality. And it is a reality which responds to our struggle to bring it more fully into being here on earth. A law of love, a yearning search for beauty, a passion for truth, a demand for that which is righteous and just—these hold together, seem to be interrelated, to be all of a piece as a part of our *becoming*. The creativity in which we share is real and it grows apace, albeit very slowly. We are co-workers in an organic process of *becoming*. And our assignment humanly—our rendezvous with destiny—is to discover and to give reality to the fulfillment of all this aspiration and vision. Our hearts are restless, if we may paraphrase St. Augustine, until they find their rest in this commitment to *becoming*—coming closer to our aspiration for human com-

## AND HUMAN VALUES

munity which we can come to love at a level which is universal.

It is in this manner that we can realize the truth that the finest self-fulfillment occurs only in a *transcending* of the self—can realize also that the saving of one's life is in the losing of it in community. In short, the constructive forces for the good life can be at once immanent and transcendent in the experience of each of us.

There are, in another facet, forces at work among us which are not only *creative*, but *redemptive* and *judging* as to human activity. Today, after a lapse of a generation into easy optimism, we are forced to look into the abyss of human nature's inadequacies, its cruelties, hatreds, and recalcitrance. We look; we are afraid. And we know now that mere knowledge of our condition is not the source of our restoration to integrity, nor of our elevation to consistent loving-kindness. We know that men sin and that they have, for peace of mind and for the regeneration of society, to be redeemed—brought back into harmony with their aspiration to *become* more fully.

The process of redemption, vital to human health and progress, has usually been construed as a religious responsibility, which it still is. But education fails to acknowledge this aspect of human experience at its peril. For the spiritual hazards of life have to be coped with by every one of us—whether or not we come out of some religious affiliation where a pathway of redemption is clearly offered. And the confrontation of sin, guilt, suffering, sacrifice, tragedy, and death, has

## MODERN EDUCATION

to be made by every mortal soul alone with himself and his Maker.

How can education ignore these great realities of experience and leave to chance their discovery by every young person who is without benefit of religious ties, or ignorant of the sources of recuperative power and renewing comfort? We cannot longer divide the living, organic connection of education and religion in this way. Even if education cannot in its own terms promise redemption, it can bring awareness of the great historic insights. It can show descriptively that there have been and are answers which men have found to their most searching questions. It can arouse concern about those answers.

Our young people have a right to know what are some of the wellsprings of faith and hope with which the race has met its tragedies and guided itself for renewed striving. At the least, education can share in giving this knowledge. The exposition it supplies will not, of itself, produce belief; nor need it be couched in sectarian terms and idioms. For what is here confronted is a universal need and yearning to transcend the narrow self into a world where the creation of more generous values is going forward.

And, finally, on this score, there is support and comfort for the individual obtainable and obtained. There does come a charging and recharging of the moral will. The human spirit is not left isolated, lonely, and rebuffed when it strives to *become*. There is a comeback, a response, a strengthening of human power if and when individuals determine to will the good, the true,

## AND HUMAN VALUES

and the beautiful. However one wishes to understand that wonderful phrase, "the spirit beareth witness with our spirits," we can all testify to its validity. However one wishes to construe its meaning, it is profoundly true that "he who would know the will, let him do the will." For as one acts, commits oneself, gets the glow and momentum of performance and attainment, more strength is given. That is not a hope; it is an experienced fact of human nature's relation to the springs of its own being.

Along such lines as this, derivative from the cravings and creations of the human spirit over the ages, we shall gradually translate hypotheses into first principles. We shall sense values and spiritual resources which are essential to our well-being, and to our trust in living. These evolving principles and growing values are not absolutely relative. Rather they are relatively absolute in the sense of a present, partial disclosure of means and an irrevocable obligation as to ends.

We are, in other words, living our way into personal, spiritual experiences where we are progressively more sure that we can combine experiment with certitude, pragmatic outlooks with convictions, tentativeness with hypotheses which are becoming principles. Our need for more and better science, for fuller artistic insight, for fuller use of democracy's processes and methods—these are not accidental. They are integral and obligatory in the human enterprise.

But, I imagine some may be saying, that all this is but a pale reflection of a more robust faith which they actually hold. Nor would I deny or argue this; nor



## MODERN EDUCATION

detract from the faith. Or, again, others may well be saying that this only expresses a little differently what they already believe. I hope this is true; yet I ask you to observe that I have been trying to express as well as I am able, as much as hopefully can gain the assent of a number of groups which are today ideologically in conflict. I confess to a strong desire to establish a meeting ground for good will and good action among differing historic religious faiths and among those of no formalized faith. One of the significant achievements of public education is that it rallies to its support those of many theologies and of no theology.

Someone has said that "the state school is the state temple"; this has to me a dangerous and threatening sound. But that the public school can articulate a view of man's earthly destiny which can surcharge its activities with moral zeal and spiritual devotion is something different and possible and desirable. It is something infinitely worth striving to achieve.

In the onward movement of men's larger relations together, the time has come to recognize areas of agreement along with their diversities of conviction. What unites men of differing faiths and philosophies has as much if not more importance to explore and dwell upon than what divides them. We know today that cultural diversity is valuable and indispensable. But we also know that we have now to strive for that degree of unity in diversity which will keep the world's peace.

The school and the college, I am trying to say, have the unique advantage that already all sorts and conditions of men there associate in equality, good will,

## AND HUMAN VALUES

and freedom. But that we do not capitalize on that fact by seeking and voicing a spiritual bond of common purpose among all these communicants is our shortcoming both of vision and method.

Education in a democracy has, in short, an opportunity, as yet hardly glimpsed, to propagate the faith in the better self and the better society, which you may call secular if you wish, but which is nonetheless essentially religious at the core in a truly universal and exalted way.

I have only time further to mention that one reason we are thwarted here—in terms of both vision and method—is the fact that no adequate symbolism or ceremonial yet exist to stir us and dramatize for us any sense of the great, beloved and unlimited community to which we are bound to seek loyalty. Today our symbols stop at the level of the nation; and even for the nation we find it hard in times of peace to rally deep and fine feeling for common purposes. We cannot summon people into a Kingdom of Righteousness unless and until the appeal of the Kingdom can be embodied into sustaining symbols with broad appeal.

Differing groups may severally be approaching our aspiration as that of a Kingdom of Man or a Kingdom of God. Depending on definitions, these approaches can be far apart. Or in their deepest meanings they can come very near together. But first principles for today's education have, it seems to me, to be of some such character as I am trying to suggest, which affects some operating reconciliation between these two positions. There is a sense in which we have to rise above

## MODERN EDUCATION

our theologies to achieve our human unity—of spirit and of program. Some may still want to afford the luxury of their individual philosophical refinements. But if we are not all to hang separately, we have to learn how to share in the enterprise of living together in a unity of spirit and with an agreed program. We are potentially, as Emerson said, better than our theologies.

The school in America, I suggest again, comes nearer to supplying that common meeting ground for high moral ends than any other agency of our contemporary life. And teachers have to rise in understanding, and in devotion to the spiritual implications of that universalistic moral bond, and use it for strengthening the culture of the next generation.

In summary, we are all, including teachers, in need of a clear affirmation of that faith which should sustain us. It is a faith looking two ways at once—to the self and to society—to the buttressing of individual confidence in the worthfulness of effort in our human careers, and to the focusing of concern on how we serve creatively as community members to bring to pass a Kingdom of Righteousness.

We do not have to wait, nor can we wait, until the answers are all in. For they never will be. Suffice it for us to know that enough answers are at hand to enable us to hold up our heads and say: "On this I stand; God willing, I will be and do no less."

Unless to teachers at every level come the understanding, the faith and the hope for the human spirit in the days ahead, none of the attributes of insight and power will be imparted into the lives of students. The

## AND HUMAN VALUES

miracle of being twice-born—once into the flesh and again into devotion to human loving-kindness—is the necessary and eternal miracle in the performing of which educators can have a share by virtue of their example, their outlook, and their deep faith.

Religion, too, has its rightful place which I have not minimized. It has to do with the renewal, the deepening, the comforting, and the restoring of the whole man. If to the vision and method of education the teacher can also add the grace of religious assurance, he is, of course, twice-blest. For at all times he or she is implicating and channeling the better motives, the more wholesome powers of young people.

If, now, it be asked what relation this discussion of a philosophical outlook has to the actual conduct of schools and classes, and how it throws any light on what we might do differently, the answer, at least in general terms, is not far to seek. It has to do in the first instance with a permeative influence, a tone, an atmosphere, a motive, and an elevation of purpose. It has to do with a buoyancy and confidence of attack by administrator and teacher alike. In so far as this outlook can possess the educator, there is surely an orientation of personality and of instructional emphasis which would be an improvement on today's approach. Of course, this will not answer all our problems; details of methodologies and applications remain to be developed.

## MODERN EDUCATION

### III

It, in the next place, will be fruitful to look at what goes on in a classroom in terms of the kinds of experience that individuals, including children at their level, have in the activities of living. I shall not talk technically of curriculum content. I want rather to ask every teacher to look at the imparting of every body of subject matter from a more over-all point of view, in recognition of the truth that there are always direct learnings and indirect or by-product learnings. I do not refer to the matter of transfer of learning, the claims of which seem to me to have been often overdone.

I ask you to consider, in a purely illustrative way, our efforts to instruct for better communication, democracy, science, vocation, and human relations. And what I shall say is that in all these areas there are vital values to be built into the human mind, into habits and into character, which at each succeeding step from nursery school to college, can and have to be infiltrated into the total learning. These stand as objectives behind the obvious objective. These are among the most crucial skills for which we wish to see learnings occur.

And to have them learned in and through and around whatever are the formal subjects of study seems an approach worth exploring.

I mention communication to remind us of the fresh importance today of both its incoming and outgoing phases. The life of a community, no less than the life of a self, exists by virtue of ability to convey meanings among persons. I do not, of course, imply that all mean-

## AND HUMAN VALUES.

ing is communicated verbally through the reception by the eye or the ear. But I shall confine my comment to the verbal aspect. First, concerning the receiving end of communication, we surely need that earlier than now in the child's years he shall develop a semantic sense, a critical power, to be sure that the word and the fact are truly related both in his listening and in his speech. This is not to disparage the poetic or imaginative use of language. It is rather to point out that adequate skill in intelligent reading needs to be more effectively insisted upon. I refer both to the mechanical problem of the speed of reading and to the better assurance of a grasp of meaning. The printed page is, after all, an indispensable tool. But more young people go to college today unable to use this tool than is socially desirable. And this fact suggests that tens of thousands who have fallen by the way before college is reached have never adequately acquired this necessary social skill. If to the assuring of a sure grasp of meaning we add the need for a more discriminating power to question and evaluate what is read, present results seem even more unsatisfactory. Yet, it is a commonplace to remark that the reading which will be done in books and newspapers, as well as the art of radio listening, all demand, more than ever, a capacity to distinguish fact from propaganda and to separate truth from falsehood.

The power to read with discrimination and to insist that words and ideas conform and correspond to that to which they are supposed to refer is a power which can be learned if there is deliberate and continuing

## MODERN EDUCATION

inculcation by teachers of the use of one's critical powers throughout the maturing process.

In its outgoing phase, communication requires an equal respect for words and a widening facility in utilizing words accurately to convey ideas. Capacity for verbalization is one which can be imparted and acquired if practice is insisted upon by teachers. Every teacher has heard too often a student answer, "I know what I want to say, but I don't know how to say it!" This verbal fumbling by the student is really an indictment of the teaching process, which need not be countenanced if every teacher is persistently requiring an improvement in individual articulateness and a widened mastery of vocabulary.

Recently, in reading papers of seniors in a high school essay contest, I encountered the sentence, "The best definition of leadership I can discover is that it is ability to lead." I submit that this is probably a reasonable reflection of the semantic powers of thousands of high school seniors. Yet this, too, illustrates an indictment to be made, not of the student, but of the educational process which leaves his mind so lacking in the refinements of common sense logic. There is no intrinsic reason why young people, by the time they reach the age of sixteen or seventeen, cannot handle language and the ideas behind it far more definitely than this. But, to assure this, every teacher, in every subject, has to be insistent perennially that the logic of language be grasped, respected, and practiced.

Even at the college level ability to speak effectively on one's feet for purposes of a great variety of group

## AND HUMAN VALUES

activities is not as general as is desirable. And actually this is a power which should be cultivated much earlier, and training in it for all should be insisted upon more continuously.

There is an enormous volume of discussion concerning how the student may come to a living grasp and conviction about the inwardness of democracy. We will agree, I trust, that the effort to inculcate conviction about the value of democracy is central to the integrity of our society. Yet I do not exaggerate when I affirm that, in any inclusive way, the educational process does not yield for our young people a clear and cogent knowledge of what democracy is, nor any deep and abiding desire to protect it or to extend its application.

Meanwhile the basic spiritual and political aspirations for which this word stands are by no means accepted, either at home or in the rest of the world, as a foregone conclusion. Democracy is distinctly on the defensive beyond our own borders; or it is not even comprehended as a practical philosophy.

Democracy is not accepted as a basis for thought and act by any exhortation of teachers, however eloquent, nor by abstract study of civics or social science, valuable though these may be at their best. But how in operating terms of activities in the schoolroom and in the relation of students to the institution as a whole, to make the influence of democratic attitude and practice concrete and attractive—that is where we are weak.

The underlying reason for this weakness is not anyone's perverse desire to be undemocratic. Rather it is a general failure to understand, first, the importance



## MODERN EDUCATION

of a truly democratic attitude, and, second, to grasp the structural implications of such attitudes in terms of the formal provisions of co-operative action which are entailed.

I have extensively, in other writings,<sup>1</sup> elaborated regarding the structural methods of democratic administration. Suffice it, therefore, to say here that it should be obvious that the nature, purpose, and aim of any organization have to be reflected in the kind and quality of administrative practices employed. And in so far as educational administration is autocratic in outlook and in methods, it is absurd to say that the way of democracy will be learned by all those involved, including administrators, faculties, and students.

More specifically, the attitude of the teacher toward students in the classroom is of crucial importance. The teacher's attitude affects both personal dealings with each student and the method of group instruction actually employed. Unfortunately, we are still not free from what are at bottom authoritarian methods of teaching in which the tacit assumption is that what the teacher says and what the book says are incontestably correct. And any attitude and atmosphere approximating a shared pursuit of knowledge through a co-operative group process in which the teacher is a democratic leader are still all too rare.

Again, far more can be done through the familiar instrumentality of student government, if only it is

<sup>1</sup>See, for example, *New Adventures in Democracy*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1945, chapters 1-7. See my *Democratic Administration*, Association Press, New York, 1945.

## AND HUMAN VALUES

sincerely initiated and patiently guided by wise teachers as an educational medium. As successive age levels are reached, more and more responsibilities can be placed upon student groups, in relation to a wide variety of activities, if only the principals and teachers have the right intentions and a vivid imagination. This applies, for example, to the participation of students in student assemblies and in the conduct of numerous extracurricular activities.

Finally, I am sure it is possible and desirable to supplement all this with an intellectual approach which makes explicit and makes appealing what the nature of democracy truly is as an aspiration of ongoing process and of collaborative methods. We continue to say that people become good democrats by the experience of practicing democracy and finding it good and satisfying for them and for their groups. But we still are failing to give enough young people enough genuine experience of democracy which they can find good and self-expressively satisfying. As a result, the very idea of democracy, to say nothing of its profound philosophical if not religious justification, is appreciated by far too few of our fellow citizens.

In asking that you consider how a grasp of what the concepts of science imply for personal and social living, I find effective texts in the following quotations:

Dr. Vannevar Bush, in his famous report to the President entitled "Science, the Endless Frontier," says:

We live in a world in which science lies at the very roots of community, and a mastery of scientific thinking grows

## MODERN EDUCATION

more and more indispensable for the successful practice of the arts of life. The culture of the modern age, if it is to have meaning, must be deeply imbued with scientific ways of thought. It must absorb science, without forsaking what is of value in the older ways or conduces to the understanding of those deeper problems which science by itself is impotent to answer. It is a question, not of substituting a scientific culture for that which has gone before, but of reaching a wider appreciation in which the sciences in their modern development fall into their due place.

Professor Wendell Johnson, in his stimulating volume, *People in Quandaries*, says this:

Because, through science, we have so drastically changed the conditions in which we live, we must, likewise through science, change the manner in which we live to accord with these conditions. It takes people who are scientific in dealing with the personal and social problems created or intensified by scientific achievement to survive in such a world.

Scientific study has at least three educational values. It is concerned with a definition and understanding of a systematic method of inquiry by means of which new hypotheses are tested and new discoveries are made. It is concerned to offer some description of the accomplishments in technology and elsewhere, which have resulted from the widespread application of this scientific method. And, finally, if less directly, it concerns itself with how the results of science are to be utilized and are to be controlled for broad public benefit.

If what the two writers above quoted have said is true, it becomes, therefore, a primary obligation of the

## AND HUMAN VALUES

school to permeate its instruction with the aim of assuring that every student gradually comes to grasp, for consistent use in his own problem-solving situations, the succession of mental steps implicit in the scientific method. It is of vital importance that we take seriously the responsibility that every youngster shall, as he readily can, know how to state problems, whether these be in the personal or other fields; that he know the nature of evidence and know where and how to look for evidence; that he know how to formulate tentative answers or hypotheses after he has deliberated upon the relation of the evidence to the problem, and finally that he know how to state the answer as it can be experimentally tested. True, there is an aspect of "hunch," often a process of incubation and always a process of speculation, in jumping from evidence to hypotheses. And people natively differ in their capacity at this point. Nevertheless, the scientific method can be learned, and its utility in the life of every person is demonstrably so great that without this he remains essentially an intellectual cripple throughout life.

I do not want any extension of scientific teaching as it is now generally done. Rather, I want a candid re-statement of the rightful aims of what training in science should achieve and a revision of instructional methods to accord with that aim. No doubt we do good enough a job with the development of scientists as such. But we do no job at all, except accidentally, in assuring that all young people are made vividly aware that there is an orderly problem-solving process without the use of which their logical powers flounder in

## MODERN EDUCATION

fatuousness. I submit that we cannot take this educational mandate too seriously. And surely we cannot conclude that it is impossible to make more people more rational—because we have never yet educationally tried to do this for all our young people.

There are, here and there at both the secondary school and the college level, signs of a reconstruction of aim. Valuable critical and constructive comment on this whole point will be found in President James B. Conant's volume *On Understanding Science*. Yale University Press, New Haven, 1947. But even with vastly improved methods of instruction in the sciences by teachers of sciences, it is still essential that every teacher, of every subject, at every level, be passionately committed to the claims of potential rationality and understand how, in and through his particular subject matter, the mental processes of problem-solving can be applied and given active exemplification. Only with this continuous subjecting of the growing mind to a habit of examining all kinds of evidence and treating problem-solving experimentally, can we ever expect to inculcate in enough people enough capacity to reason, to enable our society to rule itself and to utilize all that science has to offer for constructive purposes.

It is true, as Sidney Hook has vividly pointed out in his volume, *Education for Modern Man*, that there are still many who are afraid that education which inculcates a habit of scientific thinking will be an education which inculcates a profound skepticism, or worse. But,

## AND HUMAN VALUES

as suggested earlier in this lecture, even in the field of the establishment of the highest human values, we can only gain adherents as we can get them to obey St. Paul's injunction to "prove all things and hold fast to that which is good." At bottom, such a fear of scientific thinking indicates a profound unfaith in the appeal and the workability of our highest aspirations. For it means that we are apprehensive that, as young people examine evidence in any realm, including the moral, they will be led to a denial or a repudiation of what a historic consensus has established as decent.

Were I influential in teacher education, therefore, I would want to assure that every prospective teacher had had his imagination fired and his mind disciplined by a study of such volumes as *The Use of Reason* by Arthur E. Murphy, *How We Think* by John Dewey, *The Art of Thought* by Graham Wallas, *Productive Thinking* by Max Wertheimer and *The Grammar of Science* (first three chapters) by Karl Pearson.

The sharp separation in the practice of our general or liberal education as contrasted with our vocational education has been one of serious educational distortions. If education is for the whole man and is to minister to his competence for the art of living, the vocational aspects of his training have always to be kept in proper subordination to the broader aim. Educators are still guilty of a too sharp differentiation here, despite the fact that today, when we leave the fields of semiprofessional and professional training, vocational demands as such are actually specialized less and less

## MODERN EDUCATION

elaborately than formerly was true. We need far more realism, both among educators and among parents, about the nature of the educational and training requirements of the great run of occupations in our world.

Two facts seem true here. One is that many of the qualities valuable for a majority of occupations are as well served by general education as in any other way, leaving it to the employer to add his own special training. And the other fact is that there is no adequate social machinery co-ordinated with education which tells us with any approximate statistical accuracy how many people are required in the great variety of callings where a living is to be made. Essentially, both the individual and our school systems fly blind on this score. And until we have more adequate data, we are not in a position to pronounce a final judgment as to whether we have too much vocational education or whether it is in the right areas. But as typically conducted today, this vocational education suffers from a too slight injection of that general subject matter which should enhance the competence of the student as an all-round citizen.

As the opportunity has increased for more and more young people to have a high school education and therefore to have relatively more of them seek a college education, the view is frequently expressed that there is a danger that we will educate young people both beyond their intellectual capacities and beyond their finding it congenial and satisfying to pursue the types of employment that may actually be open to

## AND HUMAN VALUES

them. There are two good answers to this frequently heard protest. One is that it is literally impossible to educate people beyond the degree of educability of which they are capable. And the other, perhaps more important, is that we must be sure that the right kind of education is being given, adapted to the needs, aptitudes, and capacities of individuals who differ widely in talents and interests.

Actually, we would like to see far more people than now so excited about enhancing their competence for living that they would continue the process of self-education on to their adulthood. It becomes, therefore, a profound misconception of the nature of good education as a social benefit to allege that, because it does not have direct vocational benefit, it therefore has no benefit. No one can have too much education if we may assume that the education he is getting is related to his needs, interests, and potentialities. It is true, however, that education must show to all something of the variety of vocations available to them, something of the content of these vocations, and something of the creative contribution of each to society. Every job, from the top to the bottom of the ladder, will only be held with any satisfaction to the worker if he is able to see imaginatively its creative possibilities. And, for the most part, all of this is a responsibility of general education. It is part of our obligation as educators to invest the entire world of work with its rightful dignity and its necessary social significance.

At the secondary and college levels, however, irrespective of the specializations which may be desirable,



## MODERN EDUCATION

it will be essential that every teacher, of every subject, from time to time as his instruction proceeds, offer some explanation of the ways and directions in which the subject matter which he pursues has vocational relevance and application, and can make directly or indirectly some vocational contribution. This is not a crassly utilitarian demand. It is rather a rightful obligation of education in all subject matters in a world where education is not being carried on for its own sake or for the sake of the economic advancement of the individual student but for the enlargement of the capacity of each individual to lead a rounded life. Only as liberal teachers can infuse a certain amount of vocational meaning into what they teach will they find that their subjects come alive to the great majority of their students.

The final over-all intention, the forwarding of which should wisely emerge through all teaching, is some explicit acknowledgment of the claims of improved human relations. The ability of all of us to get along amiably, if not happily, with ourselves and with our associates, is not a spontaneous or untutored ability. It is no accident that a volume entitled *How to Win Friends and Influence People* has in the past few years sold several millions of copies. In fact, it was a belated recognition by many individuals that they would like to know better how to behave themselves better in the necessary dealings of man with man and of man with woman. And it would be both a defeatist and an incorrect conclusion to believe that there is no organized body of knowledge and experience which can be put

## AND HUMAN VALUES

at the disposal of others to help sensitize and improve their relations, casual and organized, with their fellow men and women.

The gradual introduction of courses actually bearing the title of "Human Relations" and similar phrasings in secondary schools is gratifying. And there is considerable significance in the fact that in the recent Harvard study of *General Education in a Free Society*<sup>1</sup> there is to be found a strong plea for the introduction of a new course which would assemble material from several disciplines as they bear helpfully upon the effort to improve human relations.

Two observations are merited here. One is that the subject matter of this field is by no means wholly to be learned by the book. There is definitely a need for the interplay resulting from all kinds of group experiences, formal and informal. There is great possibility of advance by a greater use of socio-dramatic methods, namely, the dramatic projection by the students of typical human situations and adjustments. And, in the second place, here again it is true that the pervasive example of every teacher and the continuous requirement of considerate personal action in the classroom and in all relations with fellow students are most important means of improvement.

At the moment, although I teach this very subject, I am less interested in the pursuit of this objective as a separate and distinct course of study than I am in having it in the forefront of the conscious intent of every teacher that in and through all he teaches the

<sup>1</sup>Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1946.

## MODERN EDUCATION

possibilities and the methods of improved human relations shall occasionally have attention.

We need to remind ourselves, nevertheless, that there has been a vast increase of our organized knowledge here. And the social psychologists, the social anthropologists, the sociologists, and the industrial relations experts are almost daily offering us new and helpful formulations of method.

### IV

The American teacher is at once the glory and the crux of our school system. The role of the teacher has *always been a sacrificial and a noble one*; and every support needs today as never before to be brought to a recognition of the handicaps under which the teacher labors. Hence, nothing here said will be correctly construed as in derogation of the teacher's status, achievements, or difficulties.

But we will all be less than honest together if we do not acknowledge our problem as a nation regarding the quality of this professional labor—wherever the blame may be imputed to fall.

I have, of course, at times indirectly been talking about the teacher throughout this lecture. First and most importantly of all, I characterized something of our current spiritual confusion and poverty, in which the teacher shares with all the rest of a bewildered generation. And I tried to say that an affirmative philosophy is not only rationally possible, but deeply

## AND HUMAN VALUES

necessary, to a hearty and buoyant prosecution of the teacher's task. Moreover, the teacher can be peculiarly a real and helpful spiritual leader if the faith that is in him will grasp the rightful place of the school in propagating the claims of a Great Community.

Again, in discussing the social importance of communication, democracy, science, and the rest, I have said that irrespective of issues of curricular content as such, it is possible and necessary for these several underlying skills and concerns to be interwoven as major objectives with the more obvious aim of a mastery of specific subject matter. This seems to me to be what functional education at its best will be. And it will be what it should be, for society's best protection, if every teacher understands these personal qualities and capacities which a democracy must assure in all its citizens—and if every teacher is at continuous pains to cultivate these qualities and capacities in his or her charges.

Perhaps the next greatest need in increasing teacher effectiveness is a more accurate grasp of the true meaning of *the learning process*. What our educational psychologists have most recently been telling us here is, I agree, already put to use most extensively and effectively in the nursery school and lower grades. But the higher we go into the secondary school and the college, the more striking, if not tragic, seems our ignoring of the inwardness of the nature of learning.

I know this sounds trite and tiresome. Nevertheless, I must contend that at the upper levels our teaching tends to be too verbalistic, too bookish, too abstruse, too

## MODERN EDUCATION

much memorizing, too filled with inert ideas, too unrelated to the context of living, in short, too separated from any possible interest and excitement which most students can possibly be expected to bring to bear on their learning. Having said this, I hasten to agree that the ablest teacher can give relevance and a sense of importance to any subject, and that any subject rightly taught can be the vehicle for advancing the general education of the student. But, unfortunately, we do not have enough teachers with the ability to perform this miracle of inevitably awakening the zest for learning. And it is also true that some teachers are good in spite of their slighting of some aspects of the best methods of assuring true learning.

Here again, I deliberately do not talk in terms of program. But I do ask that each of us examine our instructional procedures with minds wide open to an understanding of how learning occurs. Let that dean of educators, William H. Kilpatrick, offer his invaluable reminder when he says:

I learn what I live and I learn it as I accept it. I learn it in the degree that I live it, in the degree that I count it important to me, and in the degree that I understand it and can fit it in with what I already know and believe. And what I thus learn I build at once into character,—that, in fact, is what to learn means.<sup>1</sup>

There is a valid difference between "learning about" and learning; and I contend that we still have too much of the former. True learning has a deeper bite to it. It is thinking, feeling, acting, and expressing oneself

<sup>1</sup>*Mobilizing Educational Resources*, W. H. Kilpatrick, p. 199.

## AND HUMAN VALUES

appropriately to the needs of a situation, of a confronted experience, or of a problem to be solved. It is an implicating of desire, interest, competence, thoughtfulness, right feeling and attitude about that which is being learned. Learning is learning to use. And there is good teaching only where in this dynamic sense a learning experience of some personal impact has occurred.

Despite whatever slight exaggeration you may find in his statement, I am constrained to drive home my point with the following by Professor Stephen M. Corey of the University of Chicago. He says:

Students in college classes learn what they practice and are rewarded for . . . The best way to find out what college students are learning is to observe what they are doing. If they spend a great deal of time reading and discussing Great Books, they are learning primarily how to read and discuss Great Books. They are not necessarily learning how to behave in harmony with the principles elucidated in the Great Books. If students in science classes spend most of their time in laboratories following detailed directions that appear in a laboratory manual, they are learning better how to follow detailed directions that appear in the laboratory manual. They are not necessarily learning how to apply the scientific method of thought in situations that are to them new ones.<sup>1</sup>

I have dwelt thus on our grasp of the nature of learning because a candid examination of present classroom procedures would, I am sure, lead to radical diversifications and alterations of method. Our programs

<sup>1</sup>Corey, S. M. "The Current College Controversy," *American Association of Colleges Bulletin*, March, 1947, p. 185.

## MODERN EDUCATION

would become more activist, more variegated, more directed toward emotional growth and maturing, more accompanied by visual aids, more slanted to local community interests and conditions. It should be true of every teacher, as Dr. Houston Peterson in his eloquent volume, *Great Teachers*, so well said of Professor Simon N. Patton, "While he always had one eye on the classroom, the other was forever on the community."<sup>1</sup>

A crucial point, of course, is that we study to rescue teaching from boredom for teacher and student, and from ineffectuality and failure to stir and awaken

mind and heart of those taught. Indeed, I commend Dr. Peterson's book to you as heartening testimony regarding the sources of great teaching. For he points out that technical methods may be infinitely diverse, but he stresses that common to all great teachers is a contagious enthusiasm for the subject growing out of their sense of the importance and significance of that being taught.

To be able to convey with contagious excitement a process of true learning is a splendid gift. And I reiterate that among the ways to engender and sustain this excitement, in addition to the essential thorough mastery of the subject by the teacher, is for him to be convinced of the functional responsibilities of the education he offers. His is the exhilarating task of bringing through the experience of learning these necessary by-products which assure that not minds alone but whole persons are developing—able to think, feel, act, and ex-

<sup>1</sup>See *Great Teachers*, edited by Houston Peterson, Rutgers University Press, 1946, p. 346.

## AND HUMAN VALUES

press themselves appropriately to life in this democratic society, which is part of a Great Community.

I have only touched the problem of the teacher in his teaching. But I cannot conclude without underscoring our nation's need that teachers do a better job in forwarding true learning. This is only in part a task of scholarship; and probably the lesser part. It is, surely, more one of the character, integrity, earnestness, and public devotion of the teacher on a plane of feeling which is close to being religious in the best meaning of that word. And at the same time it is a task of the use of one's scholarship predominantly as a vehicle for requiring more orderly thinking, more constant curiosity, and more clear solicitude for some recognizable relevance of the subject to the social good.

Do not think I am being either rhetorical or sacrilegious when I suggest, finally, that the act of teaching *at its noblest* is essentially sacramental. It is symbolic of a covenant of obligation and commitment. In a real sense the mystical truth regarding the devoted teacher is the unspoken, symbolic, and humble utterance—"this is my body broken for you." We shall do well not to ignore that to some degree, and increasingly with the greatness of the teacher, this deep reality that one gives life to create life is eternally being reaffirmed. But, equally, always, and by the same token, there is also the requirement that each of us is making sure that by scrupulous personal effort, the miracle of learning is coming to pass, and sure, too, that the power which goes out from us is *truly fruitful*.

As Henry Adams said, "the teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops."



## MODERN EDUCATION

### V

The organic interrelation of the quality and method of administration with the assured realizing of objectives has already been alluded to. This relationship is generally less appreciated than is necessary, and the reasons for this are numerous. But perhaps as influential as any one is the fact that the development of administrative practice occurred historically in business and industrial organizations where a hierarchical pattern of control grew up and where the administrative hierarchy, on the whole, was copying the military conception of organization. Essentially, this military and autocratic pattern was in turn carried over into education, with its hierarchy of control from school boards (or trustees) to superintendent (or president), to principals, to supervisors, to faculty, to students. Policy, the provision of physical resources, programs of action, selection of personnel, terms of employment—all of these have typically been initiated at the top; and explicit delegation of certain powers down the line has then been made.

It would be untrue to say that this conception of administration has been wholly outgrown in industry or in government operation. But it is certainly true that a widely differing view of these interrelations of policy-making control, with acceptance by the rank and file, is coming increasingly to the fore, and has indeed to some degree already influenced educational administration. It is therefore important to examine this newer phase, since there is good reason to believe that its

## AND HUMAN VALUES

value for us in education needs to be more persuasively interpreted, and more aggressively pushed.

Let me first, then, offer a definition of democratic administration as that phrase has now been accepted. And I venture to quote from an earlier formulation of my own as follows:

Democratic administration is thus definable as that over-all direction of an organization which assures that purposes and policies are shared in the making, that methods are understood and agreed to, that individual potentialities are being enhanced, that corporate or group ends are being realized with a maximum of release of shared creative power and a minimum of human friction. It implies further a periodic, orderly, cooperative review of total performance, of leadership in action, of effectiveness of method at every point. It brings to pass collaboration as willing, coordination as informed and continuing, personality growth as an actuality and a continuing promise.<sup>1</sup>

To give effect in practical operating terms to an approach of this co-operative sort, it is, however, necessary to particularize further about ways and means. And here, too, I shall quote two related principles which I am sure can supply the needed clue to ways ahead, if they are applied in a discerning and sympathetic way. These principles are:

1. The principles of the representation of interests, which says that every special group's interest is safeguarded

<sup>1</sup>See my *Democratic Administration*, Association Press, New York, 1945. pp. 71-2. See also my chapter LIX, "A Science of Administration in the International World" in *Approaches to World Peace*, Harper & Brothers, New York, 1944. pp. 905-933.

## MODERN EDUCATION

only as there is an explicit voicing of that interest in the councils of the organization by a representative chosen by and from that group, when issues which affect it are under consideration.

2. The principle of co-ordination, which changes the emphasis from the special groups to the organization and says that the organization functions smoothly only as there is this conscious coordinative process of advance agreement throughout the organization upon the general policies and methods which will give its aims effect; and says that this process requires explicit organized group or functional representation in deliberations upon policies which determine outcomes affecting that group.<sup>1</sup>

It is impossible here to spell out all the implications of this whole modern theory of co-operative administrative relations. I must be content here to offer one or two further comments.

Good administration assumes that the best results come from a sharing and participation by those involved in an understanding and an acceptance of what is expected of them. It assumes a vital connection between the enlisting of creative motives and sustained effort, and a shared voice in the shaping of relevant decisions. It assumes that groups with common interests rise to wider loyalties as they are implicated through knowledge, discussion, and affirmative consent in the choices which have to be made. We know more and more about what is called "group dynamics," and that knowledge needs now only to be translated into revised

<sup>1</sup>See my *Democratic Administration*, Association Press, New York, 1945, pp. 17-18.

## AND HUMAN VALUES

policies and practices in educational administration.

That knowledge recognizes, for example, that for good participation the individuals and groups involved need to feel a genuine sense of equal status, equal power, and equal responsibility.

Those involved can realize that decisions reached out of collaborative conference will be sound and productive when they may truly be described as decisions which are *inclusive* in considering different points of view, are *appealing* to all involved, are *relevant* to wise outcomes, are *integrative* in bringing unity of agreement where divergence formerly was present, are *co-operatively achieved*, and then are *experimentally tried and tested*. Administrative leaders who test their procedures of joint deliberation by these criteria will be moving into democratic processes, and will be assuring also the constructive response of their groups for an improved conduct of the institution or total group.

If ever human relations in the management of schools and colleges are to be elevated beyond old-fashioned autocratic domination, if ever the teacher is to feel himself a real partner in the shaping of the total conditions under which he labors, an approach to policy and program making along the lines of explicit and somewhat formalized co-operative conference has to be created.

Collective bargaining of one kind or another between localities and their teachers is a new and to many a fearsome phenomenon. And it might well develop along lines which would not be wholly amicable or conducive to harmonious operation. But if and where such

## MODERN EDUCATION

unfortunate results occur, it will be because school boards, superintendents, and principals have failed to understand these fundamentals of democratic human relations which create good will and loyalty.

The road ahead is clear. It requires the aggressive initiative of school administrators, to take the lead in bringing into their councils the representatives of those who are being affected by the decisions being reached. The price of genuine and needed collaborative cooperation of teachers with the total conduct of education is that they be invited in, and quickly, to informed and informing participation before, rather than after, policy and program are established.

We are not without abundant evidence that a process of up-from-the-grass-roots consultations vitalizes and renders far more fruitful the whole conduct of the school and of the school system. Indeed, so crucial is this approach to a removing of a deadening bureaucratic regime and atmosphere that if school administrators are too tardy or too timid, there should be pressure up from the teachers themselves to bring these things to pass. This would not be the first time that the victims of autocracy were the ones who had to move to come out from under autocratic rule. But it is to be hoped that those in the seats of power will themselves come rapidly to see that unless administration becomes democratic in the ways here suggested, any idea that the teachers can be democratic or can teach democratic attitudes convincingly will have to be thrown out of the window. And furthermore, the morale of teacher groups will remain defeatist and discouraged.

## AND HUMAN VALUES

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I remind you of the critique with which we started—with its protest against lack of common principles, against ignorance regarding that knowledge commonly agreed to be necessary, and against confusion of aim and purpose.

I have been trying to set forth something about acceptable principles and defensible values, about our ways of imparting knowledge to enable students to get through knowledge to the acquisition and acceptance of certain basic personal and social skills, about how the teacher will better fill his role, and about the modifications in administrative practice which will bring our conduct more fully into harmony with democratic professions and with the needful experiencing of democracy as good and satisfying by teachers and students.

I have only attempted to open up vistas for your own further exploration. I shall have been guilty of more fruitless educational verbiage, however, if I have not prompted you to carry on in practice with the implications and with the concretizing of such of my suggestions as commend themselves to you.

To the extent that the salvation of our democracy is to take place through the efforts of education, that salvation is preponderantly in the hands of America's teachers. May it be said of all of us that we have been obedient under the vision which has been vouchsafed to us!